

as a criterion are summed up as follows: "Kant's solution is that the actions which can and ought to be willed in obedience to moral law are those whose maxims, if conceived as a law of nature, would further a systematic harmony of purposes among men, or at least would do nothing to destroy such a systematic harmony. . . . Indeed it may well be doubted whether it is possible to work out a systematic moral philosophy on any other basis, even although we may hold that Kant's own attempt to work it out is in many respects faulty."<sup>1</sup> Prof. Paton, to me very surprisingly, insists that Kant made the good prior to the ought, not vice versa.<sup>2</sup> I think this interpretation requires much more justification than is given.

The most difficult part of Kant's ethics is his discussion of the connection between moral obligation and freedom and his half-hearted attempt to justify ethics by an argument from outside. Prof. Paton rejects the latter argument and holds that by the time he wrote the *Critique of Practical Reason* Kant had reached the view that the moral law must be accepted as an object of immediate insight.<sup>3</sup> But he draws an illuminating parallel between theoretical and ethical knowledge which perhaps expresses what was predominant in Kant's thought when he discussed these topics. If we are to think rationally, our thought must be determined not just by previous events but by timeless logical principles, and similarly if we are to act rationally in the full sense—which for Kant means acting morally—our action must be determined by a timeless moral law, and not by the natural causation which connects it with earlier events.<sup>4</sup> This, Prof. Paton insists, does not prove ethics or freedom, but it helps us towards accepting our moral insight as we accept our theoretical insight. He thinks that Kant should have stopped here with a timeless law and not introduced the notion of timeless acts on our part, a view with which most readers will no doubt agree. While his account deals admirably with most of the subtleties involved, I must confess that on two points I feel dissatisfied: 1. his discussion of the antithesis between analytic and synthetic propositions; 2. the rather too cursory way in which he deals with Kant's identification of free and moral action, which presents perhaps the acutest and most long-standing problem in the whole of Kantian ethics.

I conclude by mentioning two omissions. It seems to me that in the present climate of thought the book would have been more useful if it had brought out more the exact nature of the opposition between Kant's view and the views which are nowadays expounded under the headings of naturalism and subjectivism. In this connection it is unfortunate that the author seems to commit the mistake of assuming that any naturalist view must reduce moral judgments to judgments about pleasure and pain.<sup>5</sup> Secondly, I am surprised that he makes no apparent use of Kant's published *Lectures on Ethics*. No doubt he has read the work but there are no references to it, and though he might say that it is concerned rather with applied ethics than with the form of ethics it is difficult to believe that no citations from it would have been helpful. But in any case we may congratulate Prof. Paton on his excellent book and recommend it very heartily as essential to all serious students of Kant's ethics.

A. C. EWING.

<sup>1</sup> P. 163.

<sup>2</sup> P. 104.

<sup>3</sup> P. 203.

<sup>4</sup> P. 217 ff.

<sup>5</sup> P. 20.

*Language, Truth and Logic*. By A. J. AYER. (London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd. 1946. Pp. 160. Price 9s.)

This book, first published in 1936, is now issued in more austere form, with no alteration of text, but with a new introduction of 21 pages, in which Mr. Ayer discusses some questions arising out of his views, and notes some changes

# PHILOSOPHY

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## COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

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### I

If I were asked to put forward an ethical principle which I considered to be especially certain, it would be that no one can be responsible, in the properly ethical sense, for the conduct of another. Responsibility belongs essentially to the individual. The implications of this principle are much more far-reaching than is evident at first, and reflection upon them may lead many to withdraw the assent which they might otherwise be very ready to accord to this view of responsibility. But if the difficulties do appear to be insurmountable, and that, very certainly, does not seem to me to be the case, then the proper procedure will be, not to revert to the barbarous notion of collective or group responsibility, but to give up altogether the view that we are accountable in any distinctively moral sense.

On this matter more will be said below. In the meantime I should like to insist that the belief in "individual," as against any form of "collective," responsibility is quite fundamental to our ordinary ethical attitudes. For if we believe that responsibility is literally shared, it becomes very hard to maintain that there are any properly moral distinctions to be drawn between one course of action and another. All will be equally good, or equally evil, as the case may be. For we shall be directly implicated in one another's actions, and the praise or blame for them must fall upon us all without discrimination. This, in fact, is what many persons do believe, and it is very hard to uphold any form of traditionalist theology on any other basis. Of late this has been very openly affirmed by noted theologians who, if they seem to do very great violence to common sense, have, at any rate, the courage and consistency to acknowledge the implications of their view, and do not seek to disguise them by half-hearted and

## PHILOSOPHY

confused formulations. We have thus witnessed recently some very uncompromising affirmations of the belief in "universal sin" or the "collective guilt of man." This does not imply that there are no ethical distinctions of any kind which we may draw. Judgments may be passed upon the outward course of our conduct without prejudice to the view that guilt itself is "universal," and this is why Reinhold Niebuhr, whose influence on religious thinking today is very pronounced, is able to combine with his assertion of the doctrine of universal sin an account of the "relative moral achievements of history."<sup>1</sup> One action may be much more regrettable than another, it may be uglier in some ways, or it may do much more harm to our fellows, and thus we have "the less and more" of our day to day judgments, but where proper moral estimation is concerned there is not "a big sinner and a little sinner." We are all involved in the sins of all.

But this is not at all what we normally think. The distinction between what is outwardly right and the proper estimation of the worth of persons is not, one must admit, always very clearly drawn in our ordinary ethical thinking. And this is very frequently a source of great confusion. There is less excuse for this confusion today than in the past, since ethical writers have thrown the distinction in question into much prominence and stressed its extensive bearing on matters of practice. It has been shown, for example, that the facts of moral perplexity, and the diversities in our views about the problems of practice, admit of no reasonable explanation unless we allow that a person may do what is wrong in some outward sense without being morally to blame, and *vice versa*. For moral ignorance is not itself a moral defect. But while this shows that Niebuhr is perfectly justified in arguing that the "historical" judgments we pass on the effects of actions have little direct bearing on questions of properly moral worth, it gives no solid support to his view that there is "no less and more" where the latter are concerned. On the contrary, the more plainly we draw the distinction between the rightness of the act and the worth of the agent, the more will it also be evident that the main reason for stressing this distinction and the main consideration by which men may be induced to draw it, is that in *addition* to the distinctions we draw between the ethical qualities of actions in their "material" or outward aspect there are even more important distinctions to be drawn in respect of their moral value. We want to be sure that our estimation of moral worth is not prejudiced by considerations relating only to outward action, and it is the former that is usually uppermost in our ordinary ethical judgments. It seems therefore plain that, however prone we may be to confuse the two sorts of ethical judgments which have just been

<sup>1</sup> *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, p. 234.

## COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

distinguished, we normally have little doubt that some of our actions are better than others, not merely in their effects, or in some other "material" regard, but in themselves and morally. All our usual ethical thinking presupposes this. And if it is to be argued that, in respect to properly moral worth, there is nothing to choose between the lives of various individuals, then it must be made very plain that this is diametrically opposed to all that we normally think, to the attitudes we adopt from day to day, and to the main body of philosophical reflection on ethical questions; for the latter has been mainly concerned with the problem under what conditions may distinctions between the strictly moral qualities of conduct be drawn. If there are no such distinctions, if the questions we ask about them are without substance, then the greater part of ethical controversy has been a peculiarly vain pursuit of a will o' the wisp.

### II

This may be affirmed without prejudice to the further question of whether it is possible in practice to form reliable estimates of one another's moral worth. Subject to certain limitations, it seems to me not impossible to assess the moral worth of another person's conduct and there appear to be some occasions where censure is in order, not merely as directed to outward conduct, or as a means of inducing reconsideration of the rightfulness of the course pursued, but as directed to the moral choice itself. But if this is denied, and if it is also held that the difficulties attending the attempt to appraise one another's moral qualities rule out every prospect of success, it by no means follows that the distinctions themselves are suspect. We can know in a general way under what conditions moral censure is incurred without needing to determine how far those conditions apply in particular cases. There is nothing very disconcerting to ethical theory in having to admit, should that appear necessary, that we have no appreciable insight into the strictly moral struggles of other persons, even in the cases of our friends and acquaintances, or such understanding of the factors involved as would lead to reasonably certain conclusions. It may even be urged that the injunction of the Scriptures, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," holds without exception, and that it is none of our business to determine how any man fares in his inner moral life. For these are matters about which we may hold various opinions without seriously affecting the question whether there really *are* differences of value between different kinds of life. And what we need most to uphold is the reality of the moral distinctions themselves, not our ability to penetrate to the substance of them in particular cases.



## PHILOSOPHY

Some comment may be added here on the reliability of the estimates we form of our own moral worth. Is fallibility in this regard also irrelevant to the question whether there really are moral qualities of conduct? This appears to me to be a most important question, but I will only venture here to make two observations. Firstly, the view which is commonly held, namely that we are usually wide of the mark in attempts to assess our own worth, seems to me very mistaken. To substantiate this in detail I should have to consider the main ways in which moral worth has been conceived. But it must suffice to note the two main alternatives. We may hold that moral distinctions depend mainly on our motives and characters, or we may relate them to some choice or free effort of will not determined by character. If we adopt the latter alternative it seems impossible that anyone should be in doubt about his own moral worth, for no one can really doubt whether he is making an effort to follow the course which his conscience requires. But if we adopt the former alternative there is room for deception of oneself in so far as we may be deluded about our own motives. But how far is such delusion possible, how far may a person persuade himself that he is contributing to a hospital from benevolent motives when he is really more concerned to ensure the esteem and gratitude of his fellows? It is often thought that we may be seriously mistaken about our motives in such cases, and that it is the business of the preacher and moral mentor to induce a deeper searching of heart and ensure a better understanding of our own characters. Literature seems to bear this out, but I am not sure that an alternative account of the facts usually adduced in this connection would not be possible if the matter were carefully investigated. But if this is denied, and if it is held that we can be widely astray in our understanding of the motives which move us to action, it seems to me that we have here a very formidable argument to advance against the first of the two main alternatives noted above, namely the view that moral worth qualifies character and motives. For, and here I come to my *second* observation, the nature of properly moral value seems to be such that it would be very strange to ascribe it to features of our conduct which we do not fully understand and bring within our control. To affirm that there can be serious delusion about our own moral attainments is thus in effect to cast very grave doubt on the validity of moral distinctions and the reality of moral responsibility.

The belief that we can be mistaken about our own moral worth owes its prevalence in no small measure to failure to distinguish effectively between questions about the "material" rightness of action and the question of the worth of the agent. In respect of the former we are indeed frequently subject to much error and perplexity, and persons of sensitive conscience have often incurred a great deal

of mental pain because the very proper concern which they have felt about the "rightness of their act" became the cause of misgiving also about their own moral worth. But when the issue is clearly confronted, and it is understood that unavoidable ignorance may not be imputed to the agent, it is hard to see how we can entertain doubts about our own culpability or blamelessness in respect to conduct sufficiently recent for us to retain a clear impression of the way we responded to what seemed to be a duty. Nor is our own impression in matters of this sort easily dimmed in the course of time.

It is in respect to other persons that appraisal of moral worth is difficult. For the factors involved are not easily accessible to the outside observer. But there is no cause for misgiving here. For even if we never knew how others fared, our assurance that their actions, like our own, are subject to moral distinctions, would not be a whit affected. But if we surrender the view that there are such distinctions, and substitute for it the notion of some uniform moral quality pervading the whole of humanity, or even the whole of a particular group, we are left with nothing which we can recognize as our workaday ethical ideas; morality has suffered a complete transformation. We seem in fact to have, not morality at all, but the repudiation of it.

### III

How, then, does this come about? Partly as a result of confusions which affect our ideas about value in general. We hypostatize abstractions and make them the bearers of value, forgetting that linguistic devices which make for succinctness of expression or poetic and rhetorical effect are not to be divested of their metaphorical and elliptical meanings, and taken as literal truth. We speak for example of sharing in the greatness of a nation, or we take pride in belonging to a musical or scholarly family even where we have no conspicuous claims to distinction in those regards ourselves. No objection can be taken to this provided we are clear what we are about. For the excellence generally attained by members of our nation or family warrants the presumption that we ourselves, having been subjected to the same influences, are not without a measure of the qualities for which others of our group are noted. The achievements of a relative, and especially of a son or daughter, may again reflect credit upon us, even when we have no part in what they have actually accomplished, to the extent that their success may be attributed to the devotion and discernment with which we have furthered their efforts. There is also the presumption that close association with persons of outstanding parts will have developed

## PHILOSOPHY

our own propensities, especially where general qualities of character are concerned. Men take legitimate pride in this way in their association with the great, or in erstwhile membership of a famous school or college. Our interest in those with whom we have special ties of affection will also enable us to follow their success with a glow of satisfaction as if it were our own. In these, and other ways, we participate in the excellence of others. But this does not mean that we can ever take credit directly for what others have become or accomplished. The worthwhileness of music does not become mine by my being the brother or parent of a gifted musician if I have no ear for music myself. What we are or achieve is affected by our relations to others, and we are emotionally involved in their lives, but what worth our actions and experiences have depends directly on their own nature. So that although we may be proud or ashamed of others, we add not a cubit to our stature; neither do we shrink, through our association with them except in the measure that we ourselves change under their influence.

This holds of all values. But it is peculiarly evident in the case of moral value. For failure may here be brought home to the individual in a very special way in blame and remorse. And this brings us to a further way in which men are apt to lose sight of the dependence of moral value on the individual.

### IV

This turns on the definition of responsibility. The etymology of this word suggests that it means "liability to answer," this being, of course, liability to answer to a charge, with the implication that if the answer is not satisfactory a penalty will be incurred. This is certainly the meaning of responsibility in the legal sense, and there can be little doubt that the original meaning of the word must be sought along similar lines, for men have not always distinguished clearly between law and morality—in primitive life both are merged in communal custom. But we do distinguish sharply between them today. It is possible to be legally guilty and morally innocent, and *vice versa*. The question arises, therefore, whether the legal meaning of responsibility provides any analogy to the meaning of the term in the ethical sense. I do not think that it does. It would, no doubt, be easy to point to sanctions which societies impose on their members outside the sphere of State enactment, some of them, for example certain kinds of ostracism, taking very subtle forms, and there are also penalties which individuals are apt to impose on themselves, as recent psychology has shown so well. But these may also be out of accord with ethical requirements. No enactment is morally fool-

## · COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

proof. A man may thus be morally guilty in respect of conduct to which no sort of penalty attaches. And this only helps to bring out in an indirect way what is in fact equally evident in cases where legal or quasi-legal requirements coincide with the moral law, namely that the mere fact of our liability to suffer a penalty is far too incidental a feature of conduct to constitute moral responsibility. Even if we hold, as do the advocates of the retributive theory of punishment, that wickedness calls for infliction of pain on the guilty agent, this is something *further* which we affirm about moral evil and responsibility, and not the essence of them. Such punishment presupposes the evil to which it is appropriate. We may thus reject the retributive theory of punishment, as I would certainly do, without *impugning* the validity of moral distinctions. What, then, does responsibility mean? It means simply to be a moral agent, and this means to be an agent capable of acting rightly or wrongly in the sense in which such conduct is immediately morally good or morally bad, as the case may be. But what do we mean by *rightness*, moral worth, and their correlatives? To this no answer is possible. For here we are dealing with ultimate ethical conceptions not reducible to natural fact. And the sum of this is that responsibility is an ethical conception not to be defined by reference to ideas which are not themselves distinctively ethical. It cannot therefore be conceived in naturalistic terms such as a threat of punishment and our liability to suffer it. But if we overlook this, and come to conceive of moral responsibility in ways not substantially different from our accountability before the law of our State, then it is easy to see how we come also to hold that there are some occasions, at any rate, when we share our responsibility with others and are immediately implicated in their wrongdoing.

This happens in the following way. Normally, the purpose served by the imposition of penalties require the penalties to be inflicted on persons presumed to have offended, and on no others. For if punishment were meted out without discrimination, its deterrent effect would be substantially lessened and, for the most part, reversed. For punishment would then have to be regarded as sheer injury or as "an act of God" unrelated to our own volitions, and, while thus little able to hinder crimes, it would often provoke them. But there are, however, exceptional cases where expediency requires proceedings to be taken against a group as if it were an individual entity. No account will then be taken of the guilt or innocence of individual members of the group. It is in this way that a teacher punishes a class of unruly children when he is not able to discover the real offenders, or when a meticulous apportionment of blame is not practicable. Such procedure may have effect in two ways, either (a) by directly deterring the main offenders or (b) by inducing the

## PHILOSOPHY

class to deal with them in ways not feasible for the teacher himself. The less recourse is had to such measures the better, both from the point of view of effective discipline and from regard to the ill-effects of a lingering sense of injustice. But there may also be some compensating factors, such as a deepening of the sense of community, which we might profitably investigate if we were concerned with educational problems or the general question of punishment. Suffice it for the present to note that, as a device for the achievement of practical ends, we have sometimes to accept collective responsibility. This is fully acknowledged in law, where a parent may in some respects be held to account for the conduct of children, or where a society or corporation may be proceeded against as a single entity or person. Extending our canvas still wider, we have the imposition of sanctions against a whole nation in the interest of international order, although it is plain that this involves quite as much suffering for the innocent as for the guilty, the former, in a case of this sort, being probably in a very great majority. Reparations and similar measures adopted against an aggressor among nations may also be mentioned here. Such measures may be needed both in the interest of immediate discipline, and as a part of political education, and they may provide means of redress to victims of aggression. But they will involve a great deal of suffering for persons who could not, by any streak of imagination, be held accountable for the culpable acts of the nation, most obviously in the case of infants and babes unborn. Something of this nature is, in fact, unavoidable in most forms of punishment and presents us with some of its most formidable problems. Locke, in consistency with his individualism, tried to show<sup>1</sup> that it could be avoided. He urged that, while the participants in an unjust war could fairly be punished with death, there should be no interference with their property, for that would involve a loss to their wives and dependents. But apart from the well-nigh impossible question of apportioning guilt for participation in an unjust war, once the leaders and authors of atrocities have been reckoned with (and that in itself is a notoriously complicated matter), *it is obvious that a man's family may be much more seriously affected, even at the economic level, to say nothing of the deeper personal loss, by the death of a parent or husband than by confiscation of property.* Punishment is therefore very likely, in most cases, to fall, in some measure, on the innocent as well as the guilty. But this unfortunate feature of punishment, and the fact that punishment has, in some instances, such as those mentioned above, to be deliberately inflicted, without discrimination, upon a whole group, serves only to show the limitations of the expedients by which society furthers its ends. Perfect justice is not attainable

<sup>1</sup> *Of Civil Government*, Part II, Section 182.

## COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

in practice, and even if measures which we normally consider expedient and just, in spite of their involving the innocent in the fate of the guilty, prove more easily avoidable than we are usually disposed to think, there will always be some intermingling of justice with injustice in human relations under any conditions we can anticipate. But what does this prove? Does it prove that the innocent share in the wickedness of the guilty, that the former are morally answerable for the ill deeds of the latter? Surely not. The question needs only to be stated plainly for us to see how foolish it is to allow our view of *moral* responsibility to be affected by imperfections in the ways in which members of society must deal with one another. And yet that is precisely what happens in a great many writings on ethics and jurisprudence, where the ideas of social and collective responsibility are put forward as properly ethical notions under cover of a false analogy with social enactments such as the enforcement of law.

An excellent instance of this may be found in two papers<sup>1</sup> by Professor Gomperz where the writer comes very frankly to the defence of the idea of collective responsibility along the lines just described. But Gomperz is only bringing out what is implicit in most accounts of responsibility in recent times. From Bradley's celebrated chapter on "The Vulgar Notion of Responsibility" in *Ethical Studies* to the symposium on the problem of responsibility at a recent "Joint Session of the Mind and Aristotelian Societies,"<sup>2</sup> by far the most predominant tendency is to define responsibility in terms of a "liability to answer" and to incur blame or punishment. This is how Bradley, like Rashdall, and other thinkers, is able to reconcile responsibility with determinism. For blame and punishment would have significance even if our conduct could not be other than it is in the last resort, provided it conformed to certain other conditions. And in the symposium to which I have referred, while the first and second contributors eschew an unambiguously naturalistic theory of ethics, they both pass easily from the view that a man is responsible because "he can be called upon to answer" (the second writer adding, "by incurring blame or moral disapproval")<sup>3</sup>—a view which, even if it avoids being naturalistic, reverses the proper relation of blame and responsibility, for the latter is prior to the former—) to cases where one person takes responsibility for the action of another, in Mr. Falk's example<sup>4</sup> the case of a Prime Minister taking responsibility for the actions of his Chief of Staff by declaring

<sup>1</sup> "Some Simple Thoughts on Freedom and Responsibility" (*Philosophy*, January, 1937) and "Individual, Collective, and Social Responsibility" (*Ethics*, Vol XLIX).

<sup>2</sup> *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume XIX*.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 249.

*Op. cit.*, p. 249.

## PHILOSOPHY

his "readiness to take the blame." But this particular example serves to show very well on what a misleading course we are set when we conceive responsibility in the way described. For a Prime Minister can never be *morally* responsible for the act of a colleague, he simply cannot "take the blame" *morally*. It may be necessary for the conduct of a war, or for the normal functioning of Parliamentary government where, in our country at least, joint Cabinet responsibility seems to be established, for a minister to allow the action of another to be treated as if it were his own. But his willingness to share the blame in this sense, especially if he puts his own position and career in serious jeopardy, induces us to esteem him highly as a moral person even if it is also a reason for seeking to overthrow his administration. For his "implication" in the follies or misdeeds of his colleagues is not a moral one, but a requirement of certain governmental procedures, and his loyal acceptance of it, at personal inconvenience, redounds to his credit. It would, of course, be a different matter if he had encouraged or condoned the wrongful policy himself, or if he were sheltering a colleague for personal reasons or were retaining him against the interest of the public. He would then be morally responsible, but in respect of his own action. But to accept responsibility for others for practical purposes, to incur certain consequences for what another person has done, is one thing, to be morally accountable is another; and in this last regard we cannot answer for one another or share each other's guilt (or merit), for that would imply that we could become directly worse (or better) persons morally by what others elect to do—and that seems plainly preposterous.

## V

The belief that guilt may be shared derives some plausibility also from the loose expressions which normally serve our turn when we need to refer to the contributions of several persons to a joint undertaking. Take a case of burglary. We have first the thieves who actually carried it out. One of these may be the prime mover, a confirmed criminal perhaps, another a novice pressed somewhat reluctantly to be his accomplice. The temptation may have been put in the way of these two, and the opportunity provided, by an acquaintance who hears the victim a grudge but takes no part in the actual robbery beyond supplying useful information. Yet another person may have covered the escape of the criminals or, by hindering the work of detection, have become an accessory after the fact. Finally, we may have a "receiver" who disposed of the stolen goods. Each of these persons is in some way implicated in the crime, and they may thus

## COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

be said to share the responsibility for it. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that we have here a single criminal operation the blame for which rests equally on all concerned. Even the law would discriminate sharply in such a case, imposing the heaviest penalty on the habitual criminal, but, in his own case as well as that of the others, reviewing the judgment in the light of extenuating circumstances, previous convictions etc. The instigator who provided the original inducement might easily escape the toils of the law altogether. But at the properly moral level many further factors must be taken into account, several of them, as has been stressed, not easily accessible to the outside observer. And in this reckoning many roles may be reversed, the instigator, possibly, proving the worst offender. What has to be stressed is that the guilt of each is strictly proportionate to his part in the joint undertaking. It is not one crime that we have but many.

This seems very evident in the simple case described. It is just as true, however, in respect to complicated matters, such as social and economic injustices, where the lure of vague collectivist explanations is stronger. Reformers have often reminded us that we need, not merely to hinder the criminal, but also to remove the causes of crime, and, in this connection, it is frequently maintained that society shares the guilt of the criminal. Gomperz instances the case of a poor woman who steals a loaf to feed her starving children, and he contends that society is really as responsible as the woman herself, in as much as society failed to provide for her needs. He even goes so far as to speak of blaming the social "structure." But that, it seems evident, is only meaningful in a figurative sense and as a rhetorical device when concern is to be aroused at distressful social conditions. If taken in the literal sense, as Gomperz appears to intend, it is very misleading. For "a structure" cannot be the bearer of moral responsibility; neither can "society in general," for these are both abstractions which we must be careful not to hypostatize. What should be said, if we are to speak exactly, is this. The guilt of the poor woman is lessened, if not eliminated altogether, by her circumstances. But she alone is to blame, if blame there is to be, for what she herself has done. Others are also to blame, but *for something else*, namely for their part in allowing her to remain in desperate need. But they are responsible for this as individuals, and strictly in proportion to what each might have done, directly or indirectly, to ameliorate her lot.

It has also to be emphasized here that there are severe limitations on the power of the individual to modify social conditions, for normally he can only do so by concerted action, and concerted action, moreover, which requires a consensus of opinion on highly complicated social and economic questions. It is thus very foolish simply to look



about us, as we are prone to do, and, having noted grave and persistent social ills, such as poverty, waste, unemployment, and war, straightway to take these as a measure of human wickedness. For ills of this sort, while they do in some ways reflect the moral life of a community, and provide the basis for *some* generalisations, can not be regarded as an indication of intentional evil until we have considered carefully just what could have been expected of the average individual when confronted with them. Allowance must be made for ignorance, for the need for leadership, and for the peculiar difficulties which attend the corporate effort required for effective social reform. This does not imply that the individual must simply surrender to the drift of events, or acquiesce passively in the policies of a handful of leaders. There is much that he can do, but ultimate success will depend on a great many factors wholly outside his control, no less in a democratic than in a totalitarian country. And therefore we need to be careful not to form exaggerated conceptions of human depravity by looking, not to what could reasonably be expected of the individual, but to society as a corporate entity directly accountable for social and economic ills.

This has a close bearing on the problem of war guilt. This question, it should be stressed, is only one aspect of the general question of the treatment of aggressor nations. For many factors besides that of moral guilt enter into the latter problem. But so far as the properly moral issue is concerned, we do very serious damage to the prospect of eventual reconciliation if we allow a distorted conception of moral guilt to complicate questions which are already bewildering enough, the more especially as we shall not merely form a wrong estimate of the course we should pursue ourselves, but also encourage those pathological conditions to which vanquished peoples are prone, and which, however they may accord with our mood and the immediate requirements of a situation, are certain, if only by being an unhealthy condition unrelated to any rational assurance, to emerge at a later date in ways very little amenable to rational control—whatever the precise direction they take. What we need to ask, in the case, for example, of Germany, is not what is the record of Germany as a nation in the inter-war period or later—or our own record for the matter of that—but just what could have been expected of the average German citizen in the swirling tide of the events which engulfed him and others eventually in the deep vortex of war. This is not to suggest that he was helpless and must be exonerated altogether, and that questions of guilt concern only those who were in positions of power and authority. There were undoubtedly many things which the ordinary citizen might have done, and I can only leave it here for the historian in due course to attempt to determine what they were. But allowance must clearly

## COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

be made for tradition, outlook, and environment, for the difficulty of anticipating the course of events (and it is easy for us afterwards, and from outside, to be wise about these), for the very limited influence which the individual, even if he is of a heroic mould, can normally have on the policies of a ruthless totalitarian government, and for the determined opposition to warlike and despotic measures which a certain proportion, at any rate, of the German people showed. Let us seek, by all means, to extend the influence of democratic principles which will enable the individual to give of his best to his State. But in the meantime, let us be fair to him, wherever he is found, by relating the question of guilt, not to some abstract entity in which he and all other individuals are merged, but to what we can reasonably estimate could have been expected of the individual, who is the sole bearer of guilt and merit, in the particular situation confronting him.

I should like to stress again what has already been noted, that no one is morally guilty except in relation to some conduct which he himself considered to be wrong. This seems plain enough in our ordinary encounter with one another from day to day, for circumstances force it more sharply upon us in close and immediate relationships. But it needs to be borne in mind very carefully when we are seeking to form ethical judgments about a vast concourse of people with whom individual and personal ties are slight. Otherwise we shall be inclined to arraign other peoples for follies and misunderstandings which, whatever the measures they may warrant in practice, are, I repeat, no direct indication of *moral* culpability. Again I do not imply that "to understand all is to excuse all." But I insist that we must first understand, and then we can have some indication of guilt. But to understand is very much harder, it calls for more wisdom and patience, when dealing with men in the mass than when we have to do with individuals in relative isolation, the more especially as the normal working of our imagination presents us with a simplified picture in which the nation or group is personified, and, having been given a mind and will of its own, is set to act on a stage very much simpler than the actual stage of history.

We are most prone to these false simplifications of complicated issues in times of confusion and change such as the present. For in such times there is apt to be a recrudescence of primitive ethical attitudes, as the recent history of Europe shows so well. And primitive peoples pay little heed to the individual; the unit is for them the tribe or the family. But reflection upon the affinity between the doctrine of collective responsibility and the indiscriminating "ethic of the tribe" should go a long way to discredit the former.

Failure to take due account of these matters will not only distort

## PHILOSOPHY

our vision in this or that particular regard, and poison our relationships. It will also give us in general an utterly misleading picture of man and "the human situation." Of this there is ample evidence already in the prevailing fashion of gloomy denunciation of all human endeavour, an indulgence which may show itself before long to be a more serious business than we are inclined to realise. Its immediate progeny are despair and its twin, irresponsibility. But worse may follow.

### VI

How far these reactionary estimates of human activity owe their persistence to mistaken philosophical views is not easy to determine. But they have obviously derived much support from "organic" theories of society, such as the celebrated Idealist Theory of the State and the cruder forms of totalitarian theories which prevail today. These latter have not yet taken very deep root in democratic countries, and although the idealist doctrines, whose authoritarian aspect was, incidentally, qualified in important ways, were in the ascendancy towards the close of the nineteenth century in Western thought, they do not accord well with the main tendencies in European culture and civilization, much less with the temper and traditions of the British people. They have been very extensively discredited today so far as philosophical thought is concerned. It is therefore well to remind ourselves that the ideas of a pervasive communal guilt and of collective responsibility are simply the obverse of the tendency to set some abstract good of the community above the wellbeing of its individual members, a tendency whose natural terminus is the ruthless oppression and totalitarianism against which our face is so resolutely set in democratic countries. Most of the arguments which have recently been used so effectively to demolish the ideas of "a common good" and a "general will," as those terms are usually understood in philosophy, hold with undiminished force, *mutatis mutandis*, against any theory of communal guilt.

*The advocates of collectivist theories of society, whether they be theories of human good or of human evil, are apt to hold their opponents in contempt on the score of an alleged individualism. But this is very largely a case of hitting at random, and making play with the meaning of a highly ambiguous word. Individualism may mean several things. It may mean that the good which human beings ought to pursue is always a private one, or it may mean, again, that individuals have unlimited and inalienable rights, this latter being, I think, its main meaning in Western philosophy, or it may indicate the general failure to appreciate the dependence of*

## COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

the individual on his social environment. In all these meanings the term stands for mistaken theories, and theories which have also, unfortunately, wrought very serious havoc in our thought and practice in the past, and which continue at the present time to obstruct very necessary positive reforms. But individualism in these reprehensible senses, has no necessary connection with the view that the individual is the sole bearer of value. We may insist, and the need to do so is as great in many regards today as in the past, that no one can have proper interests of his own unless he has also interests in others, that we are "members of one another" even with regard to properly moral struggles in so far as the attainment or failure of one person is a matter of concern to his neighbours who are *to that extent* involved in his moral attainment or failure. No one lives in a vacuum, no one is, or should be, unaffected by the destinies of others. And where natural sympathies reach their limit, or where the welfare of one is opposed, as in many ways it may be, to the welfare of others, there yet remain our duties to further the wellbeing of others independently of any advantage to ourselves. Although no one is "responsible for" others in the sense that he is answerable for the conduct of others, we are all extensively "responsible for" our fellows in the sense that we have duties towards them—most of our duties are of this sort. But all this may be fully allowed without affecting the principle that value belongs to the individual and that it is the individual who is the sole bearer of moral responsibility. This principle is not individualistic in any way which is incompatible with a true estimate of our essential social relationships. It is not "atomic" in any objectionable sense.

"But," it may be argued, "what of the individual's dependence on his society; is not our conduct shaped by our environment?" My answer here is that anyone who holds that the individual is never free to choose his action in a way not determined by factors outside himself should surrender the idea of properly moral responsibility; the position cannot be saved by extending our responsibility to our environment, and the attempt to do so is an excellent *reductio ad absurdum* of the view that morality is compatible with determinism. To bring this out fully would require careful discussion of the uniqueness of moral value and of other matters which cannot be brought within the scope of this paper. It must suffice here to note that the doctrine of freedom as "self-determination" makes no substantial difference to the present issue. For the fact that determination is of a special kind, and involves a peculiar assimilation into the character of the agent of the forces which affect him, still leaves the determinist with the view that factors from outside ourselves have gone to the shaping of conduct. And if the notion of responsibility is to be retained at all in such a case, it is hard to see

## PHILOSOPHY

how we can avoid extending it to these further factors<sup>1</sup>, an embarrassment that does not arise in connection with non-moral values which do not carry with them the notion of guilt and a correlative merit. The determinist thus finds himself extending the blame for wrongful actions to our environment, and eventually to the whole of reality. There arises in this way the notion of a principle of evil in the universe at large; and this notion has a wide currency at the present time. It derives much support from uncritical accounts of the findings of recent psychology, and it also encourages capricious play with the mythologies of primitive religion. This also contributes to the dissemination of irrational and despondent estimates of human attainment. But it seems evident that the quietus to such reactionary tendencies cannot be finally given until moral philosophers turn with much greater resolution than at present to the much neglected problem of moral freedom. This is the crucial problem today for religion as well as for ethics and politics. But here again I am touching on matters which cannot be effectively brought within the compass of this paper. Neither has it been possible to comment on the more specifically religious aspects of the problem of collective guilt, although these are in many ways the most important.

<sup>1</sup> Sir David Ross, for example, argues that a person's "responsibility for acts is divided" because "other people by teaching and example, the writers of the books he has read, and so on, have all helped to mould his character into that form of which his action is the expression." *Foundations of Ethics*, p. 248.

## EXISTENTIALISM

The Rev. F. C. COPLESTON, S.J., M.A.

To treat existentialism as *a* philosophy is no more possible than to treat idealism as *a* philosophy. The reason is obvious. Jean-Paul Sartre is an existentialist and Gabriel Marcel is also an existentialist; but the philosophy of Sartre is not the same as the philosophy of Marcel. One can no more speak of the philosophy of Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre, Marcel and Berdyaev, as though they maintained the same system, than one could speak of the philosophy of Plato, Berkeley and Hegel, as though one philosophy was common to the three thinkers. Of course, if one took idealism in the sense in which the Marxist uses the term, as meaning the doctrine that mind is prior to matter, i.e. as opposed to materialism (with the suggestion that realism and materialism are equivalent), one would have a definite theme to consider; but one would be forced to recognize as idealists thinkers who would never call themselves by that name and who would not be generally recognized as such. Similarly, if one said that existentialism is the doctrine that man is free and that what he makes of himself depends on himself, on his free choices, one would doubtless have mentioned a doctrine which is common to the existentialists and which they insist upon; but one would at the same time be forced to include in the ranks of the existentialists philosophers whose inclusion would be manifestly absurd. It is very difficult, then, to assign to existentialism any doctrinal content which would be common to all those who are generally recognized as existentialists, but which would at the same time be peculiar to them. M. Sartre has asserted that existentialism "is nothing else but an attempt to draw all the consequences from a consistent atheist position,"<sup>1</sup> while Berdyaev is reported to have exclaimed, "*L'existentialisme, c'est moi!*" But Berdyaev is no atheist, while Sartre is not Berdyaev: the positions are obviously incompatible. According to Sartre, that which all existentialists have in common is the fundamental doctrine that existence precedes essence;<sup>2</sup> but though this may be a doctrine common to all existentialists, it does not seem to be peculiar to them, if one regards its essential meaning. It means in effect that man has no given character which determines his actions, but that he is free, and while this doctrine would distinguish existentialism from all forms of determinism, it would not distinguish it from other philosophies which also deny determinism.

<sup>1</sup> This paper represents a lecture given at Oxford on May 23, 1947.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*, p. 94.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

## PHILOSOPHY

M. Sartre may say, and indeed does say, that his meaning is that man has no essence antecedently to his free choices, to the essence he creates freely; but since he is able to delimit man as the object of his existential analysis in such a way that chickens are excluded, it is difficult to take him altogether seriously or to suppose that the proposition, "existence precedes essence," amounts to much more than an emphatic assertion of liberty and an emphatic denial of any form of physical or psychological determinism. In the case of M. Sartre the proposition is certainly bound up with atheism, in the sense that he denies the existence of any archetypal idea or divine idea of man, which is realized or unfolded on the plane of created existence; but if the proposition is understood in a sense which would be acceptable not only to Sartre and Camus, but also to Marcel, it can hardly involve atheism, though it would involve the rejection of that determinism which seems to be implied by certain theistic systems, by that of Leibniz, for example.<sup>1</sup>

Nor does it seem that we can define existentialism in general in reference to what one might call "personal thinking." Kierkegaard was certainly a personal thinker, in the sense that he philosophized on the basis of his personal experience (a knowledge of his relations with his father and with Regina Olsen is by no means irrelevant to an understanding of his thought), and so far from attempting to construct an "objective system," he directed a great deal of his polemic precisely against "the System" and against "objectivity;" but one could hardly say the same of Heidegger, who sets out in *Sein und Zeit* to construct an ontology, to investigate the problem of being. In a letter to Jean Wahl, Heidegger protested that his philosophy was not *Existenzphilosophie*, that his investigation of human existence or of the being of human existence was but a preparatory stage to an examination of being in general, and that his philosophy should not be confused with that of Karl Jaspers who considers the concrete possibilities open to the human being, without aiming at the development of any general theoretical ontology. It is true that Jaspers has declared that it is the task of the philosopher to awaken man to the possibilities of choice and that existentialism as a general theory, is the death of the philosophy of existence; but he is much more of an observer, a philosopher of philosophies, than a personal thinker in the sense in which Kierkegaard was a personal thinker.

Nevertheless, even if it is difficult to find a doctrinal content which is common and at the same time peculiar to the existentialist philosophies, we all know that the word existentialism has objective reference and that it is not unreasonable to group together Kierke-

<sup>1</sup> Leibniz defended "liberty," it is true; but not all would recognize as liberty what he regarded as such.

gaard, Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre, Camus, Marcel, however great and however important the differences between their respective philosophies may be. I suppose that in the first place one can link them together by their common rejection, explicit or implicit, of all forms of "totalitarian" philosophy, using the word "totalitarian" not in its political sense (primarily at least), but as signifying any philosophy which minimizes the position and importance of the individual as the free, self-transcending subject and as the central datum of experience. One does not need to labour the point that Kierkegaard, for whom, owing to the circumstances of his university education, philosophy meant the Hegelian system, revolted against the Hegelian exaltation of the Idea or Absolute at the expense of the individual and against the Hegelian insistence on mediation and on the synthesis of opposites. The primary fact is the individual, and it is simply comical if the individual strives to strip himself of his individuality and to merge himself in the universal consciousness or cosmic reason. True philosophy is not objectivity, but it is the fruit of passionate interest; in other words, thinking is personal, not impersonal, and its value lies in its clarification of choice and its appeal to choose, the ultimate object of choice being the self in its relation to the Transcendent, to God. Similarly, Jaspers insists that the function of philosophy is not to teach a *Weltanschauung*, but to make clear to the individual the possibilities of choice and what authentic choice is. In the limiting situations, particularly in face of contingency and death, man recognizes the enveloping presence of the Transcendent; but the deciphering of its nature depends on an act of choice, and the study of the life and thought of men like Kierkegaard and Nietzsche serves to make clear the personal character of the choice of *Weltanschauung*. It might seem that Martin Heidegger constitutes an exception since, as already remarked, he sets out to develop an ontology; but in point of fact since he actually starts with man and ends with man, he falls into line with the other existentialists. Heidegger lays his emphasis on authentic choice, though for him this choice is really the choice of the self as the being doomed to death, *das Sein-zum-Tode*. As to Sartre, although he gives as the subtitle of *L'Être et le Néant Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique*, the emphasis is on man as *projet*, as the being which creates itself by free choice, as the possibility of its own transcendence, and this theme reappears in plays like *Les Mouches* and novels like *Les Chemins de la Liberté*. Although Sartre makes considerable use of Hegel in *L'Être et le Néant*, particularly in regard to the power of the negation, he is at one with the other existentialists in insisting on the individual. He declares that his starting-point is the subjectivity of the individual (and that for strictly philosophical reasons), and that the first and basic truth is the *Cogito, la vérité absolue de la*



*conscience s'atteignant elle-même.*<sup>1</sup> For Camus, again, though he insists at length on the absurdity of the world and of human life (as in *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, *L'Étranger*, *Le Malentendu*, *Caligula*), the real problem is how the individual is to conduct himself in an absurd world. Of Marcel's philosophical writing one can say that a great part of it is devoted to revealing to man what he is and what his spiritual activities, his truly human activities, imply.

Although it is not formally true of Heidegger, it is actually true of all the existentialists, therefore, including Heidegger, that they take man as the central theme of philosophy, and that by man they mean the free, self-creating, self-transcending subject. Looked at under this aspect existentialism may be regarded as a revolt against absolute idealism (at least so far as Kierkegaard is concerned, and the same is partly true, I believe, of Marcel) and as a revolt against positivism, materialistic determinism and psychological determinism, against any form of philosophy which would reduce man to an item in the physical cosmos, so far as this would imply determinism, and against any form of philosophy which excludes a consideration of man's inner life and destiny. (To assign as the central theme of philosophy man's inner creation of himself by his free choices is to turn one's back on logical analysis, for example, as a sufficient subject for the philosopher.) Again, existentialism, by insisting on the individual, on the free subject, is also a reaction against the tendency to resolve the individual into a number of functions, such as citizen, taxpayer, voter, worker, trade unionist, civil servant, etc. This theme is developed particularly by Gabriel Marcel. In other words, existentialism is the re-assertion of the free man against the totality or the collectivity or any tendency to depersonalization, and in this respect it is akin to personalism and pragmatism.

Before proceeding further it might be as well to anticipate an objection against the mode of treatment of existentialism adopted in this paper. I can well imagine a Marxist saying that existentialism is the philosophy of the dying bourgeoisie, the last convulsive effort of an outmoded individualism, and in point of fact M. Naville (though I do not think that the latter is a Marxist) suggested to M. Sartre that his philosophy was really a resurrection of radical-socialism adapted to present social conditions. *La crise sociale ne permet plus l'ancien libéralisme; elle exige un libéralisme torturé, angoissé.*<sup>2</sup> The Marxists have called M. Sartre the philosopher of the misfits, *l'écrivain des ratés*, and they wonder what the phenomenological analyses of *L'Être et le Néant* have to do with history. Moreover, many critics, whether Marxists or not, might be tempted to observe that it is a mistake to treat existentialism abstractly, that

<sup>1</sup> *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*, pp 63-64.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.

one should treat it in relation to its historical and political circumstances, in relation, for example, to the fall and liberation of France and the ensuing social and political conditions, or even that one should treat it as a literary, and not as a philosophical phenomenon. However, while it is doubtless legitimate to treat a philosophical movement in relation to political and social circumstances, it is also legitimate, and in my opinion a good deal more relevant, to treat any philosophy which professes to be a philosophy as a philosophy, i.e. abstractly. Anyone who is prepared to allow the possibility of attaining philosophical truth must admit this. Moreover, the consideration of political and social conditions is more relevant to explaining the popularity and vogue of a philosophy than to settling the question of its truth or falsity. Existentialism cannot be explained simply in terms of the last war, if for no other reason than that Marcel was writing long before the war began, while Sartre published *La Nausée* in 1938; but it may very well be that recent and present conditions in France help to explain the vogue of existentialism, the interest it has aroused. It would certainly be absurd to exclude the social and political approach as altogether illegitimate; but if one is entitled to treat dialectical materialism as a philosophy and not simply as the transient expression of passing historical circumstances, one is also entitled to consider the thought of M. Sartre from the point of view of its truth or falsity rather than as affecting or not affecting the welfare of the proletariat. As to the literary approach, I would remark that the use of the drama and the novel by Sartre, Camus and Marcel certainly helps to explain the wide interest taken in existentialism; but the significance of those plays and novels for the philosopher consists in their philosophical import, and any student of Sartre is aware that his popular productions can be properly understood only in the light of his general philosophy.\*

To return, then, to my abstract treatment of existentialism. It seems to me that the existentialist starting-point, man as free subject, is a legitimate starting-point, considerably more legitimate than some principle which is postulated as ultimate, though its existence cannot be known *a priori* and though to presuppose it is to presuppose a whole philosophy. The excuse for starting with an ultimate and presupposed ontological principle is that if the philosophy built on it or deduced from it constitutes a complete and coherent account of reality, its justification is evident. But apart from the fact that this seems to involve a further presupposition concerning the character of reality and the power of the human mind, the history of philosophy appears to show that facts of ex-

\* In the case of Gabriel Marcel special consideration should indeed be given to his idea of the relation of drama to philosophy; but I cannot embark on that subject here.

perience are not infrequently distorted or slurred over in order to fit in with the preconceived principle, and not the least important of these facts is precisely the human consciousness of personal freedom. It may be objected that the existentialist presupposes freedom, whereas it ought to be demonstrated; but in view of the initial consciousness of freedom, it is the determinist, not the maintainer of freedom, who should be called upon to demonstrate his position. M. Sartre deals with certain determinist arguments in *L'Être et le Néant*, the argument, for example, that motives determine conduct, and he attempts to show that a conscious being must be free, that the *pour-soi*, as opposed to the *en-soi*, must be free owing to its ontological structure, that it does not simply possess liberty, but is its liberty<sup>1</sup>—does not Orestes say in *Les Mouches*, "I am my liberty?"—but in any case he evidently thinks that liberty is a datum of immediate experience and that the determinists are trying to evade the recognition of a truth of which they are, to some extent at least, inevitably aware; they are in *mauvaise foi*, they are *les lâches*.

Secondly, I think that it is to the credit of Heidegger and Sartre that in their insistence on the free ego they do not at the same time create the Cartesian gulf between the ego's self-consciousness and its knowledge of the world and of other selves. Their datum is not the self-enclosed consciousness, but the self in the world, *Dasein* or *la réalité humaine* comes to know itself in and through its experience of the *milieu* and of other persons, and to separate off the consciousness of the ego from the original total experience, in such a way that it becomes necessary to prove the existence of extramental objects and of other selves, is, they recognize, to create an artificial problem which is hardly capable of a satisfactory solution, since the premisses are themselves unsatisfactory. *Par le je pense, contrairement à la philosophie de Descartes, contrairement à la philosophie de Kant, nous nous atteignons nous-mêmes en face de l'autre, et l'autre est aussi certain pour nous que nous-mêmes.*<sup>2</sup> Whatever one may think of M. Sartre's protracted discussion of our knowledge of other selves and the phenomenon of *le regard*,<sup>3</sup> it is a matter for rejoicing that he does not allow his insistence on the *Cogito* to blind him to the artificiality of Descartes' procedure. If the free self in M. Sartre's philosophy tends to be a closed self, this is due, not to any adoption of the Cartesian gulf between the self-enclosed consciousness and the external world, but rather to the fact that he tends to concentrate on those activities which turn the person into a thing and which render impossible true personal relations, those activities which

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *L'Être et le Néant*, pp. 508 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*, p. 66.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Être et le Néant*, Part 3, Chap. I, *L'Existence d'Autrui*.

belong to the sphere of what Marcel calls *Avoir*, as distinct from the sphere of *Être*. Marcel, who also avoids the Cartesian gulf by his insistence on the primary fact of *incarnation*, embodiment, concentrates on those spiritual activities of man, such as love and fidelity and hope, which involve the relationship of person to person, thus revealing the self-transcending subject or self as essentially "open," not as self-enclosed.

The starting-point of existentialism may, therefore, be called a realist starting-point; M. Sartre insists that knowledge is always knowledge of something and consciousness always consciousness of something; neither knowledge nor consciousness creates its object. The world is the object of knowledge and is not created by the knower in regard to its being. The world is phenomenal in the sense that what we mean by the world is that which appears; but it does not follow that we can reduce the being of phenomena to *percipi*. If the being of phenomena consisted in *percipi*, the percipient would exist outside himself, since to perceive is to perceive something and this implies a distinction between subject and object. One can speak, therefore, of the trans-phenomenal being of phenomena (in the sense that the object has being independently of the percipient), though this transphenomenal being is simply the phenomenon in itself, not an unknowable noumenon underlying the phenomenon.

But though Heidegger and Sartre are to that extent realists, their realism is none the less a post-Kantian realism, in that they both emphasize the part played by the subject in the constitution of the world of experience. For Heidegger the organization of the world into a system of relations depends on the interests, the preoccupations (*Besorgen*) of the subject. Man, *Dasein*, is essentially orientated towards the other than himself, and each object appears as a *Zeug* or tool, its meaning or essence residing in its tool-relation, its relation to the preoccupation of the subject. According to the interest or preoccupation of the subject there is the world of the physicist, the world of the ethicist, the world of technique and so on; but all these worlds are included in a total system, of which we have a kind of preview or anticipation. This concept of world in general, of an intelligible totality, an inclusive *Unwelt*, is the creation of *Dasein*; it is the system of relations created by the multiple possibilities of *Dasein*, the unified field of those possibilities, though it is due, not to an *a priori* category of the understanding, but to the first characteristic of *Dasein*, its being-in-the-world, its orientation towards the other than self in terms of interest and development of possibilities. This view of the world is obviously strongly reminiscent of Fichte's conception of the world of objects as the field for the self-realization of the ego, the field of the ego's moral activity, though Heidegger does not mean to imply that the brute existence of things is con-

stituted by the ego (he is not an idealist in that sense), but that the intelligible being of things, their meaning, their organization in an intelligible system, is constituted by man's possibilities of self-transcendence. *Dasein* and *Umwelt* are really two aspects of one reality, being-in-the-world. To interpret the world is to construct the world, but this power of construction is limited by the very finitude of man.

The same theme is present in the philosophy of Sartre. It is man, *la réalité humaine*, who makes the world to arise, as an organized and intelligible system. Consciousness (*le pour-soi*) does not create being as such, unconscious being (*l'en-soi*), but it organizes it into a system, marking off, as it were, individual objects, and determining their mutual relations in terms of its own interests. Distance, being far away or near, really depends on the interests of the *pour-soi*: America, for instance, is far away to the displaced person in Germany who would like to go there but cannot, while it is nearby to the millionaire who can go there by plane whenever he likes, while to a person who has no interest at all in America it is neither near nor far, it is simply "there". Similarly, the future can be understood only in terms of the possibilities of man: *c'est par la réalité humaine que le futur arrive dans le monde*.<sup>1</sup> In itself *l'en-soi* is opaque, gratuitous, unintelligible: it owes its differentiations and its intelligibility to consciousness, to *le pour-soi*.

But if the Kantian and Fichtean elements in the philosophies of Heidegger and Sartre, together with their peculiar insistence on liberty, might lead one to class them as (partly) idealist philosophies, there is another important element in virtue of which they are more akin to materialism. Original being, *l'en-soi*, is, according to M. Sartre, non-conscious; it is simply itself, opaque, self-identical: *l'être est ce qu'il est*. We really cannot say anything about it except that it is; the ideas of activity and passivity, for example, are human ideas, and being in itself is beyond activity and passivity. Moreover, we are not entitled to apply the category of necessity and say that it is the necessary being, the Absolute. It did not create itself, it is true; but it is simply there, gratuitous, *de trop*. In fine, all we can say of *l'être en-soi* is that it is and that it is what it is. Perhaps it cannot be formally described as material, but that is obviously what it is to all intents and purposes. The shade of "father Parmenides" can be discerned in the background.

Being-in-itself is thus gratuitous, *de trop*; but how does consciousness, *le pour-soi*, arise? At this point Hegel is dragged in from the wings to take his place on the stage. As for Hegel being, emptied of determinate content, passes into not-being and gives rise to the category of becoming, so for Sartre consciousness arises from non-

<sup>1</sup> *L'Être et le Néant*, p. 168.

conscious being through the power of the negation. Consciousness means distance from and presence to at the same time; it is the negation of being-in-itself, but it presupposes being-in-itself and is separated from it by . . . nothing. Being-in-itself contains no negation; it emerges (i.e. *le néant*) only through consciousness, which secretes its own nothingness. To be conscious means to exist at a distance from oneself as present to oneself, and this distance from oneself is no thing: consciousness, then, arises only through a "fissure," a negation, being introduced into being, and it is *le pour-soi* itself which introduces this negation, so that it is in this sense its own foundation. That there is consciousness at all is a contingent fact, for which the "ontologist" can give no certain explanation; but we may say that being-in-itself, which is gratuitous, attempts to found itself (that it is *projet de se fonder*) and that it can do so only through the emergence of consciousness which aims at becoming its own cause or adequate foundation, at attaining the status of *l'en-soi-pour-soi*. In plainer language we may say that brute being has an aspiration to overcome its gratuitous and contingent character by becoming the conscious Absolute, and human consciousness emerges as the means of realizing this aspiration. But this aspiration is doomed to frustration: consciousness is being constantly grasped by the *en-soi*, by that contingency which it cannot escape. Man is a *passion*, a desire to escape from his original contingency, a flight before the past (with its invasion of *facticité*) towards the goal of becoming the Absolute without thereby losing consciousness, i.e. towards the goal of becoming God. But the idea of God, of the *en-soi-pour-soi* is impossible, and as man begins by birth, so he ends by death and relapses into *facticité*. If we look merely at man, at his aspiration to become God, we must admit that he is *une passion inutile*,<sup>1</sup> while if we regard the emergence of individual consciousness as a means whereby *l'en-soi* endeavours to become the conscious Absolute, we must admit that gratuitousness and absurdity have the last word as they had the first word.

In so far as M. Sartre is serious in putting forward this remarkable piece of mythology, one may say that he is proposing a kind of Hegelianism *manqué*: being-in-itself is the aspiration towards the realization of absolute consciousness, but it is doomed to frustration: *l'en-soi* is the alpha and omega, and human life is vain, absurd. Stripped of all Hegelianism, however, M. Sartre's contention is simply that being is meaningless, *de trop*, inexplicable, that consciousness is a mere passing epiphenomenon,<sup>2</sup> and that human life and human history are vain and absurd. It is really at this point

<sup>1</sup> *L'Être et le Néant*, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> According to M. Sartre, *l'âme est le corps en tant que le pour-soi est sa propre individuation*. *L'Être et le Néant*, p. 372.

that the characteristic theme of Sartre and Camus begins, the problem of conduct in a world which has no given significance, in which there are no universal and absolute values, but in which man is free and cannot evade the total responsibility of choice and the creation of values which is involved in choice. But leaving aside for the moment this humanistic theme, I wish to draw attention to the dogmatism contained in the initial presuppositions of M. Sartre. M. Sartre affirms dogmatically the priority of being-in-itself over being-for-itself. That human consciousness reveals itself as consciousness *of*, that it presupposes an object, I have no wish to dispute; but that this implies the derivation of consciousness from non-conscious being does not follow. It is not an evident fact by any manner of means that consciousness is derived from the non-conscious, still less that the non-conscious is, in general, prior to the conscious, to mind; and to suggest that non-conscious being has a kind of urge to become God or the conscious Absolute is to suggest a mythological hypothesis. M. Sartre asserts that being-in-itself is gratuitous, *de trop*; but what is this but an initial and gratuitous presupposition of atheism? Sartre does indeed attempt to show that the idea of God as self-identical consciousness is contradictory, since consciousness involves distinction; but it does not necessarily follow from the fact that finite human consciousness reveals itself as involving distinction, that all consciousness necessarily involves distinction. The logical positivist might remark that no other form of consciousness can have any significance for us, since our idea of consciousness is founded on the only consciousness we experience, human consciousness; but when the theist says that God is infinite selfconsciousness, he is saying that God cannot be less than the consciousness we experience: he does not pretend to have (and indeed cannot have) a clear and adequate idea of what infinite consciousness is in itself, but he has a clear idea of what "not less than" means. In any case, if we leave God out of account and speak simply of the necessary Being, by what right does Sartre affirm, as he does affirm, that there is no such being and that it could not explain contingent being? I am not aware of any philosopher of the first rank who has adopted this strange position. Thomas Aquinas, Spinoza and Hegel no doubt differed in their views as to the character of the necessary Being; but they did not suppose that the notion of such a Being can be dispensed with. If, moreover, it be asserted that the category of necessity is a purely human category, one could obviously make the retort, as far as Sartre is concerned, that in this case the category of contingency is in the same boat, and that instead of declaring that being is *de trop*, M. Sartre would do much better if he observed a discreet and modest agnosticism.

From his initial atheist position M. Sartre draws the conclusion

that there are no absolute values, but that values are the creation of man, the individual man, who in fixing his own ideal creates his own values. However, as the foundation of all values is liberty, it would appear that liberty must be itself a value independently of choice, since man did not choose to be free, but is "condemned" to be free, as M. Sartre puts it. To deny consistently the objectivity of values is not such an easy task as M. Sartre seems to suppose. Heidegger and Sartre distinguish authentic choice and unauthentic choice, and it is very difficult to avoid the impression that the former, authentic choice, is considered to be superior in value to the latter. If there are no objective values, it should make no difference whatever, from the valuational standpoint, what one chooses or how one chooses.

The dogmatism of Martin Heidegger is probably more disingenuous than that of Sartre. He makes play with ideas like contingency and dereliction, insisting on *die Geworfenheit des Daseins*; but the question of a "Thrower" he does not raise, passing it by silently, though it is clear that to a man of Heidegger's particular upbringing the problem must have been present.<sup>1</sup> He does not speak in Sartre's somewhat airy fashion of God and religion; he does not fulminate passionately like Nietzsche; he hardly speaks of the matter at all, and the most he does is to observe that man's concept of being is finite. But what does this prove? That man's apprehension of the Infinite must in any case be a partial and finite apprehension; it certainly does not prove that man can have no knowledge that the Infinite exists or that he cannot even raise the question of the Infinite.

I mentioned that Sartre calls *l'Être et le Néant* an essay in phenomenological ontology. The use of the phenomenological method is common to the existentialists (as a rough generalization at least, this is true), and in my opinion its use constitutes in some respects a strong point and in other respects a very weak point of existentialism. The phenomenological method of Husserl means the objective analytic description of phenomena of any given type. Husserl himself applied the method to the invariable structures of psychic experience (such as "intention," being conscious of, perceiving); but the method can be applied in various fields, to religious or aesthetic experience, for example, or to the perception of values. Husserl regarded the application of this method as a necessary proædæutic to ontology, which it should precede. For instance, the phenomenologist will consider the essence of "being conscious of," without presupposing any particular ontology or metaphysic, but letting the psychic phenomenon speak for itself. Whether it is possible in practice to exclude all such presuppositions and, if it is possible,

<sup>1</sup> I am speaking of Heidegger as author of *Sein und Zeit*. I have heard it said that his views have changed since, but I do not know if this report is correct or not.



how long it is possible to persevere in the suspension of judgment concerning the existence or mode of existence of the object regarded (the Object of religious experience, for example) is obviously disputable; but the application of the method certainly has its value and some of the existentialists have made a fruitful use of it. Thus in the course of *L'Être et le Néant* M. Sartre gives long, descriptive analyses of time or temporality, of "bad faith," of *le regard*, of love, while Gabriel Marcel has practically done the same for faith (not in the theological sense), hope, love, *disponibilité*; and one can say that the phenomenological analyses of Heidegger, Sartre and Marcel, and of half-existentialists like Lavelle, are admirable pieces of intellectual work. Although Kierkegaard indeed was dead before Husserl was born, and his works were written long before Husserl and Scheler applied the phenomenological method to their respective themes, one can say that he applied the method to phenomena like *Angst* or dread, and it would doubtless be profitable to trace out and compare the different analyses of dread, *Angst*, *angoisse*, as given by Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Sartre. The use of this method is legitimate enough in itself, and the actual use of it made by the existentialists constitutes, I suggest, one of their strong points.

On the other hand, if one chooses to use the phenomenological method of Husserl, one should either adhere closely to the *epoché*, or, if one does proceed to make existential judgments, one should note carefully the transition from phenomenology to ontology. As an example of what I mean, I shall refer to Sartre's treatment of *la nausée*. In the novel of that name Antoine Roquentin, sitting in the public gardens of Bouville, is depicted as having an experience, i.e. an impression, of the gratuitousness, the inherent contingency of the things around him and of himself; they and he himself appear to him as *de trop*, gratuitous, without rational justification for their existence. Now, I should certainly not deny that an impression of this kind is possible as a subjective experience, and M. Sartre has a perfect right, as a novelist and indeed as a phenomenologist, to describe it; but I suppose that it is clear to every intelligent reader of *La Nausée* that Roquentin's subjective experience is assumed by the author to have objective reference, that it is, implicitly at least, described as corresponding to reality, as affording information about the character of being. But this involves an illicit passage from description to positive doctrine, from phenomenology to ontology. It may be said that M. Sartre proves his doctrine elsewhere. But does he? It is true that in *L'Être et le Néant* he distinguishes ontology from metaphysics; but it is also true that he assumes from the very

\* By ontology he means phenomenology applied to the structure of being revealed in experience; but ontology in this sense could obviously do no more than reveal the finite and contingent character of actually experienced being.

beginning the gratuitousness of being, the epiphenomenalistic character of consciousness, the finality of death, and indeed all those supposed facts which bring out the absurdity of the world, and of human life in particular. In the exercise of his powers of description and of analysis he shows great virtuosity, intelligence and ability; but when he plays the part of an ontologist, I do not think that it is unfair to call him a dogmatist. To do him justice, one must admit that, like Heidegger (who, as intending to pursue a strictly ontological investigation, does not pretend to employ the *epoché*), he sets out to give a phenomenological ontology and not to act as a phenomenologist pure and simple; but it remains true that he tends to slide from descriptive analyses of subjective experience into existential judgments concerning the objective reference of those experiences as adequate apprehensions of reality. In my opinion he does this because he has already chosen his philosophy. This leads him to single out for description those phenomena which will lend support to the assumed position. That a philosopher should select and dwell on those aspects of reality which illustrate and support his main position is only to be expected (Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, all do this); but if a philosopher builds his system on certain aspects of reality and then supports the system by reference to those aspects, slurring over other aspects, he involves himself in a vicious circle.

Albert Camus proceeds in a similar manner. In *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* he describes and analyses *le sentiment de l'absurde*, and the absurdity of life is illustrated or portrayed in the concrete by dramas such as *Le Malentendu* and stories like *L'Étranger*. The dramas and stories, however, illustrate a thesis which is assumed and not proved, which is taken for granted. Gabriel Marcel has written plays and has subsequently distilled philosophy from them and it may be said that Camus' plays portray life in the concrete and are a legitimate generalization from experience; but one can obviously reply that life has many aspects and that if one consistently chooses only certain aspects for portrayal, one does so in virtue of a preformed judgment as to what life is. Moreover, the possibility of the world and human life having a meaning and purpose which, partly at least, transcends the world, cannot be ruled out legitimately from the beginning; the denial, like the affirmation, of such a meaning and purpose stands in need of some proof; it can neither be taken for granted nor based simply on certain selected aspects of life. To speak of Platonism or Christian theism or of pantheism as escapism, as a refusal to face the facts of life and of the world in general may sound very well in the ears of those on whom any appeal to psychology acts like the voice of the Siren; but it is of little value from the philosophical standpoint, unless first of all the arguments of

the Platonist or of the theist or of the pantheist have been adequately refuted.

So far I have referred mainly to the atheist existentialists, and I have suggested that when Sartre says that atheism is for them a *point de départ*, he must be taken seriously. Atheism is for Sartre a *point de départ*, a dogmatic assumption, though it would perhaps be more accurate to say that it is the fruit of a certain mentality and intellectual atmosphere. He shows no sign of feeling the problem of God in the way in which Nietzsche felt it. For Kierkegaard, on the other hand, man's relation to God is all-important; the supreme choice is the choice of oneself as a creature in relation to the infinite and personal Absolute, God. In spite of their contradictory views on the God of Christianity, Kierkegaard is more akin to Nietzsche than is Sartre, inasmuch as Kierkegaard and Nietzsche were both personal thinkers, whose thought can hardly be understood apart from their lives. But one result of Kierkegaard's intensely personal standpoint is that, while he is able to describe in an admirable manner man's possible attitude to God, man's submissive choice of his God-relationship, man's defiance and sin, the aesthetic and moral planes of existence, and so on, and while he is able, in the name of *Existenz* and "subjectivity," to conduct a polemic against the Hegelian mediation of opposites and the synthetic merging of finite and infinite, he omits altogether to prove objectively the existence of God and the rational justification of the leap of faith; indeed, he expressly denies the legitimacy of natural theology or the metaphysical approach to God. To turn this point into a reproach against Kierkegaard may seem to be an unfair procedure and to involve a misunderstanding of his dialectic, since by faith he does not mean an attitude or activity which could be attained by way of metaphysical speculation. This last point is doubtless true; but from the philosophical standpoint, which is the standpoint with which we are now concerned, one cannot justifiably demand acceptance of an object the existence of which has not been demonstrated. Kierkegaard may indeed be chiefly occupied with the question how one becomes a Christian, i.e. a true Christian, and his words may very well be of value to the Christian; but none the less from the speculative standpoint he demands a leap, and his affirmation of God, when regarded from that standpoint, is a dogmatic affirmation. The words of a twelfth-century Scottish philosopher and theologian, Richard of St. Victor, are here relevant: "I have read concerning my God that He is eternal, uncreated, immense, that He is omnipotent and Lord of all . . . all this I have read; but I do not remember that I have read how all these things are proved. . . . In all these matters authorities abound, but not equally the arguments . . . proofs are becoming rare." If Sartre and Camus dogmatize as to the

absurdity of the world and human life, Kierkegaard dogmatizes as to the existence of God. This may seem a hopelessly abstract and high-and-dry attitude of criticism; but I do not see how any philosopher can deny its relevance.

Gabriel Marcel, the Catholic existentialist, is possibly in the same boat as Kierkegaard; whether he is or not, seems to me to depend on the answer to the question whether he regards his philosophy as simply a phenomenology of *la réalité humaine* or as also an ontology and metaphysic. Elsewhere I have suggested that Marcel is pretty well as much a "leaper" as Kierkegaard;<sup>1</sup> but I do not feel quite sure that the accusation is just. Let me take an example, to illustrate my meaning. "It is doubtless true to say that there is no other metaphysical problem than the problem, 'What am I?', for it is to this that all the other problems are reducible."<sup>2</sup> Now, if I analyse man, I can find in him the demand for or the hope of immortality, at least as implied in such activities as fidelity to another. If a loved one has died, it depends on me, on my interior attitude, to maintain his or her "presence," without letting this "presence" be degraded to the status of an image, a mere memory; creative fidelity demands this.<sup>3</sup> Is such a line of argument meant to be a description of certain human spiritual activities which imply a hope of immortality, or is it supposed to be a proof of immortality? If the former, one cannot accuse Marcel of dogmatism; if the latter, it would appear to me that he leaps from the desire or hope of immortality to the assertion of immortality, and I should agree with Duns Scotus, who adorned this University centuries ago, when he maintains that one cannot argue from the desire of an object to the actuality of that object; one has first of all to show that the attainment of the object is at least possible. If one could discern with certainty a natural desire for immortality, one might argue to the fact of immortality, provided that one has first shown the rationality of the universe and of natural desires, which in practice means proving the existence of God. If the world were such as Sartre and Camus depict it, the desire of immortality would certainly not show that the human soul actually is immortal.

Again, it is rather difficult to know whether Marcel regards his analysis of man's spiritual activities as constituting a proof of God's existence or not. It may be that an activity such as love implies the presence of the Transcendent in and through which human beings can communicate as persons in the mutual giving and self-sacrifice of love, and one might try, by arguing along the lines indicated by

<sup>1</sup> "Existentialism and Religion," in the *Dublin Review* for Spring, 1947.

<sup>2</sup> *Homo Viator*, p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> *Positions et Approches Concrètes du Mystère Ontologique*, in *Le Monde* *Catol.*, p. 290.

Marcel, to show the "irrationalists" like Sartre and Camus that they have not really thought out their position and its implications, and that the problem of God is more real than they suppose; but it is doubtful if one could prove God's existence, in any strict sense of the word "prove," by reflections such as those of Marcel. Moreover, his distinction between a "problem" and a "mystery" would appear to involve a position analogous to that of Kierkegaard in regard to the proofs of God's existence. Guido De Ruggiero asserts roundly that Marcel's procedure involves a series of leaps to undemonstrated conclusions, and his contention may be true; but if one regards Marcel's philosophy not as a "system" in the ordinary sense, but as an endeavour to reveal to man what he is and to awaken in him the perception of the "meta-problematical," of what Marcel calls the "mystery" of being, the question of the leap and of dogmatism hardly arises. And, even though Marcel's distinction between "mystery" and "problem" is spiritually akin to Kierkegaard's insistence on "subjectivity," I now regard this second line of interpretation as the right one.

According to Guido De Ruggiero,<sup>1</sup> "at bottom, Marcel knows from the beginning where he wants to arrive, and, seeking, he has the air of a man who has already found." But Marcel did not begin as a Christian philosopher, and he claims that his reflections on human existence opened the way to the definitive conversion which took place in 1929, a claim the truth of which one can have no adequate reason to doubt, though it does not necessarily follow, of course, that the considerations which weighed with Marcel would appear probative to another type of philosopher. As to wanting to arrive at a certain conclusion, what would be proved by the existence of such a wish, supposing that it was present? Insistence on "wishful thinking" is so often irrelevant, as can be seen from an example. Lord Russell, in his *History of Western Philosophy*, emphasizes the fact that when St. Thomas Aquinas undertook to prove God's existence, he was already convinced of the truth of the conclusion at which he arrived and that he wanted to arrive at that conclusion. This is quite true; but the relevant question for the philosopher is not what St. Thomas' wishes happened to be, but whether his proofs were cogent or not. It may be that Marcel wanted to arrive at a theistic conclusion and Sartre at an atheistic conclusion; but the relevant question for the philosopher is whether either of them proves his position. As regards Sartre, I am quite sure that he dogmatizes, in substance if not in form; as regards Marcel, I do not feel certain, for the reason which I have indicated. It may be objected that I persist in criticizing the existentialists from a standpoint which is not their own; but then it is precisely their standpoint which I find inadequate.

<sup>1</sup> *Existentialism*, p. 40.

## EXISTENTIALISM

M. Sartre claims that existentialism is a humanism, and I want finally to consider existentialism, under this aspect. M. Sartre rejects the humanism which takes man as an end, since man is always something to be made, not something already made (to practise a cult of Humanity after the style of Auguste Comte is, for Sartre, ridiculous); but he claims that the existentialist doctrine that man is free, that he is the being which transcends itself and creates itself by free choice, that he is his own legislator, unfettered by any absolute values or universal moral law, constitutes a true humanism. Obviously a great deal depends on what one understands by humanism. If by humanism is meant a doctrine about man, then M. Sartre's philosophy is certainly humanistic and M. Sartre himself, as a student of human nature, is a humanist; but if humanism be taken to imply devotion to human interests or concern with human interests, it may well be doubted if the Sartrian existentialism is humanistic. A conviction that man is totally free, that there are no absolute values and that man is responsible neither to God nor his fellows may seem to open up that boundless ocean of possibility of which Nietzsche spoke; but is the liberation more than apparent? Man must choose, he is "condemned" to be free, he cannot but make something of himself (even if he commits suicide, he chooses, he draws a line under his life and says, "that is what I am"); but it makes not the slightest difference ultimately what he chooses, what he makes for himself, since man is *une passion inutile*. A Hitler or a Francis of Assisi, a Nero or a Buddha, what does it matter? If values are the creation of the individual and depend on his choice, there is no standard of valuational discrimination between different types of men or between the ends they set themselves, their ideals. As to authentic and unauthentic choice, authentic choice, if there are no absolute values, is no more valuable or praiseworthy than unauthentic choice, whereas if on the other hand authentic choice is more valuable in itself than unauthentic choice, if, for example, it is objectively better to be a Communist or a Christian as the result of a choice proceeding from an authentic act of the will than simply out of social conformism, there must be an objective standard of value and values are not simply the individual's creation. One cannot have it both ways. M. Sartre might learn something from Plato in this matter. The atheist existentialists seem to attach a value to clear knowledge and decisive choice and action, just as Nietzsche, who theoretically denied the existence of absolute and universal values, clearly thought the "noble" type of man objectively better than the "ignoble." To act with resolution, even with the clear perception of death as the inevitable and final end, seems to constitute a value for Heidegger, while revolt against the absurdity and meaninglessness of existence is admired by Camus, and Sartre attaches value to *engagement*.

## PHILOSOPHY

Sartre might say that it is not a question of *engagement* having a value antecedent to choice, but that it owes its value simply to the individual's liberty; but does not the affirmation of a value by the individual presuppose the perception of value? The logical consequence of atheism may be, as Sartre, following Nietzsche, says it is, the negation of absolute values; but the conclusion is valid only if the premiss is valid, and if there is an awareness of value which precedes the acceptance or affirmation of value, the premiss is at once rendered doubtful: at any rate it cannot legitimately be taken as a *point de départ*.

In any truly humanistic philosophy account will be taken of all sides of human nature; but if a being from another world were to gain its knowledge of human nature from *L'Être et le Néant*, *La Nausée*, *Les Chemins de la Liberté*, *Le Mur*, *Huis-clos*, *La Putain Respectueuse* and *Morts sans Sépulture*, that being would have a very one-sided idea of man. If one touches on this theme, one runs the risk of being misunderstood; it may appear that one is simply moralizing, that one is objecting to a novelist or dramatist introducing certain themes into his novels and plays; but I am not concerned to lay down rules of censorship for novelists and dramatists, but rather to point out that a philosopher who claims to analyse and describe *la réalité humaine* and who at the same time omits or degrades man's higher spiritual activities is unfaithful to his task as a philosopher. A novelist, considered as such, may legitimately confine his attention to certain types of people or certain aspects of human nature; but a philosopher of man should possess a comprehensive vision. If he does not possess it, his picture of man will be inadequate, and if he proposes to erect a general philosophy on his analysis of human existence, his general philosophy will be correspondingly inadequate. It requires no great experience of human nature to know that the phenomena which appear to fascinate the attention of M. Sartre actually occur; but if one were to compare the analysis of love, for example, as given by Sartre with that of Gabriel Marcel, one would have to admit, if faithful to the total data, that a level of spiritual activity to which Marcel's eyes are open seems invisible to those of M. Sartre, for whom love is, at best, *une duperie*. This makes more difference than may appear at first sight. Sartre dwells on those aspects and activities of man which illustrate his theory that man is *une passion inutile* and that life is absurd, whereas Marcel discerns those spiritual activities of man which imply at least an appeal to the Transcendent, even if they do not strictly prove its existence. Similarly, whatever one may think of Kierkegaard's rejection of natural theology, it remains true that he discerned and emphasized those activities and attitudes of the spirit which imply a "vertical" transcendence, in contrast to Sartre's exclusively "horizontal"

transcendence. If the philosopher recognizes the existence of those activities and attitudes, he will concern himself seriously with the question of their objective implications; but if he is blind to them, he will naturally pass over the question. Nicolai Hartman, in his great work on ethics, spoke of a blindness to values; M. Sartre seems to me to be one of the myopic in this respect.

In conclusion I should say that existentialism, in spite of its important defects, is of value in that it draws attention to the human person as free and responsible. A rough definition of existentialism, so far as one can give one, might be that existentialism is the descriptive analysis of man as free, self-transcending subject, a descriptive analysis which is itself designed to promote authentic choice. Whether adequate or not, such a definition does at least bring out the fact that the existentialist deals with man as subject, and as free subject; he starts, as Sartre says, with subjectivity. The system of Hegel himself can scarcely appear to us in the same dangerous and threatening light in which it appeared to Kierkegaard, but there are other systems of philosophy, one of which at least is of great practical importance, the effects or implications of which in regard to the human subject are no less dangerous than those which Kierkegaard, rightly or wrongly, considered to follow from the Hegelian system. But if one wishes to protest against such systems in the name of the human person, it is essential to have an adequate idea of the human person, and in this respect Heidegger, and still more Sartre, are radically deficient. Kierkegaard and Marcel have a deeper insight into the nature of the human person, and in that respect their philosophies are superior to those of Heidegger, Sartre and Camus (though, as I mentioned earlier, the phenomenological analyses of Heidegger and Sartre are often excellent). But existentialism as such can, it seems to me, have little future, unless an adequate and faithful descriptive analysis of man-in-the-world is made the basis for, or is united with, an unprejudiced attempt to construct a rational ontological and metaphysical system. Heidegger and Sartre really prejudge the issue from the start, while with Kierkegaard and possibly Marcel subjective impressions and experiences tend to take the place of objective reasoning. Philosophic reasoning can quite well begin with the human person; but without a sustained effort of reasoning no durable philosophy can be developed. Phenomenological analyses, however brilliant they may be, are an insufficient basis for a philosophical system. Moreover, it is one thing to start with "subjectivity" and another thing to surrender to subjectivism; however great the faults of the system, Hegel's insistence on objectivity and "impersonal" thought is not altogether devoid of value.



## THEISM \*

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THEISM is a modern word, meaning belief in God. But there is no unanimity about the attributes of God. The Greek *theos* meant a superhuman and in particular an immortal Being. For the Platonists he was a "Soul," and there may be more than one soul. The Christian Fathers—Augustine as well as the Greeks, could say without reproach that God became man in order that man might become divine. The Logos in the Fourth Gospel is God, but not the Godhead. "My Father is greater than I."

But in this essay it will be convenient to accept modern definitions of what we mean by Theism. A. E. Taylor says, "Theism is the doctrine that the ultimate ground of things is a single supreme reality which is the source of everything other than itself and has the characters of being intrinsically complete and perfect and an adequate object of unqualified adoration or worship." To the same effect Flint defines Theism as "the doctrine that the universe owes its existence and its continuance in existence to the reason and will of a self-existent Being, who is infinitely powerful, wise, and good."

These definitions exclude several theories about the nature of God which have been held by many who do not deny His existence.

The Epicureans believed that the gods live their own life in calm enjoyment, not interfering in any way with human affairs. As Ennius says: "Ego deum genus esse semper dixi et dico coelitum, sed eos non curare opinor quid agat humanum genus." Other sects naturally said that this is practically atheism. Aristotle seems to have taught that the relation of man to God is the desire of the moth for the star. He attracts the creatures like a magnet. There is no reciprocating love on God's side. Aristotle has been called the father of Deism. Spinoza also said that we must love God without expecting Him to love us in return—a harsh saying which I think is inconsistent with his later view. The Deism of the eighteenth century practically made God a *roi fainéant*. He created the world, but leaves it to run its own course. All theories which make God purely transcendent and not immanent, including Barth's unfortunate phrase that God is "wholly other" than ourselves, belong to the same type. We can enter into no relations with a Being who is utterly different from ourselves. "In the image of God created He them," says the Book of Genesis.

\* Series, *Contemporary World-Outlooks* (III).

Polytheism is excluded, since there can be only one Being with the attributes ascribed to God. But a subordinate polytheism certainly exists in popular Catholicism, and in other Christian bodies the doctrine of the Trinity has often been held in a manner which might be called tritheism. In the later Paganism religion was monotheistic without denying minor gods and spirits. The supreme Being may employ superhuman agents.

Metaphysical dualism is obviously excluded. We cannot, if we are theists, believe in an anti-God. It was perhaps the influence of Persia which brought Satan into Judaism and so into Christianity, though for us Satan is pictured as a fallen angel, not as a rival Deity. But, as I shall say presently, we human "amphibia" live and think on different levels. The moralist, as moralist, must be almost a Manichean. We are combatants in a cosmic duel, wrestling, as St. Paul says, not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers, the world-rulers of this darkness, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places. Some of the later Platonists, taking advantage of an ambiguous phrase in Plato, believed in "an evil world-soul," but there is certainly no devil in Plato. Modernist theology wishes to abolish the devil; but, as McNeile Dixon says, if we do, belief in God fades at once. "In yes and no all things consist." It is only when we ascend in thought from this world of claims and counter-claims to the eternal realm where God sitteth above the waterspout, that we can contemplate the victory over evil already won. The eternal world is the realm of which we are "citizens": but here we are strangers and pilgrims, *in via*, not *in patria*, as the old theologians said.

To the psychic level belongs the idea of a limited, striving Deity, which has been defended by Mill and more recently by Rashdall and H. G. Wells. It has been associated with a theory which does not necessarily go with it, that of an evolution of God. This theory belongs to a climate of opinion which is perhaps beginning to change under the influence of the dark patch in history which we have now reached. It is the child of the perfectibility theory which began in the eighteenth century and luxuriated in almost insane vapourings in the nineteenth, and of the doctrine of evolution associated with the name of Darwin. Evolution became the frame into which all events had to be fitted. It was forgotten, though Kant had made it quite clear, that evolution—the mechanical unpacking of what was present in germ from the first, and epigenesis, which recognizes the action of new creative activities, are incompatible theories. The first denies, the second asserts, the reality of change. The problem of change is one of the most difficult in philosophy; in mathematics there is identity between the problem and its solution; time does not come in; a sum may be worked backwards as well as

## PHILOSOPHY

forwards. We may suspect that the popular word "emergence," as used by Lloyd Morgan, Alexander, and others, is well chosen to mask or combine two contradictory theories.

The coalescence of the assumed law of progress and of the method of evolution gave birth to the fantastic notion of a *nisus* towards perfection in nature, or at any rate in human nature. The absurdity of arguing from the historical progress of humanity—assuming that this can be proved—to progress as a law of the universe, becomes more apparent the more we think about it. The human race, after perhaps half a million years of almost stable equilibrium, discovered the use of tools a few thousand years ago. *Homo faber* has made no biological progress; the Cro-Magnon skeletons were those of taller men with larger brains than the modern European; but civilization has made discoveries in the arts of life which I, at any rate, have no wish to disparage. During a comparatively short episode in his career man has made astonishing changes in his habits. Will this era of "progress" continue? We cannot tell. There may be new flowering times of civilization, more golden ages like those of ancient Athens, mediaeval Italy, and I should add the reign of Queen Victoria. But it now seems possible that mankind will commit co-operative suicide; in which case our successors, if we have any, or the theologians of the planet Venus, will doubtless say that the extinction of this noxious species is a strong argument for the providential government of the world. It is even more likely that we shall follow the social insects, who must at one time have been vigorously progressive and inventive, in arriving at a stable equilibrium, which may last for millions of years. For a few generations it would be necessary to liquidate sporadic thinkers; but in time this disturbing variation should be eliminated, and we should be guided only by the frozen intelligence which we call social habit or instinct. The socialist planners will then have won their victory.

However that may be, there is not the slightest reason to suppose that there is any tendency to progress in the universe as a whole—an absurd and "blasphemous" idea, according to Bradley—or in any part of it that we know except in the recent history of the white-skinned section of the species to which we happen to belong. The *nisus* to which Alexander gives so much importance seems to be imaginary. Stability is the rule; change a rare exception.

Even the most hopeful of wishful thinkers know that as Lucretius says we are only leaseholders on this planet. The time will come when our home will be no longer habitable. For the last hundred years it has been believed by physicists that not only our globe but the whole universe is doomed. The Second Law of Thermodynamics, which the French call the principle of Carnot, commits us to believe in an irreversible process which must end in the extinction of all

life everywhere. It may be that science has not yet said the last word on this subject. The activities of the cosmic rays have not yet been fully explored. If the accepted view is right, the clock which is now running down must have been wound up at some date which we could name if we knew it; and presumably whatever power wound it up once may wind it up again. But if there is any recuperative agency in nature, it has not yet been discovered. Origen, who accepted as revealed truth the end of the existing cosmic order, believed that there has been and will be an infinite series of worlds following each other. It seemed to him hardly credible that God would allow a time to come when nothing will happen any more. There can be no revelation on such a subject, but at present we have no right to believe that life in the universe will last for ever. It follows that if God is "organic with the universe," if the world is as necessary to God as God is to the world, the time will come when God will cease to exist, or will pass into a dreamless sleep, "lost to time and use and name and fame." Such a Being would not be the God of religion. Of course, if time is unreal, the problem need not be stated in this way; but many thinkers have felt that if time is "the moving image of eternity," the time-form of eternity must be perpetuity, and the idea of a dead universe, with a temperature of  $-273$  degrees centigrade, is hard to reconcile with belief in an intelligent Creator. This however is not conclusive. The nature of time may exclude perpetuity.

Christianity teaches quite definitely that though the creation may be the necessary result of the character of God, it is not an essential part of His nature. As Coleridge put it, if  $G = \text{God}$  and  $W = \text{the world}$ , then for Christianity  $G - W = G$ . Some have thought that the relation of an artist to his works is perhaps the best analogy of the relation of God to the world. There is nothing illogical in unilateral dependence. Platonism asserts this quite as strongly as Christian theology.

Besides the influence of the supposed cosmic law of progress, which the Catholics call the last Western heresy, and the idea of evolution as the key to history, we have to reckon with modern democratism, which dislikes the picture of God as an absolute monarch. It is not polite to smile at our friends while they are at their devotions, but an American on democracy sometimes talks like a fool. "God is not known, He is used. If He proves Himself useful, the religious consciousness asks for no more."<sup>1</sup> "The higher man will not tolerate old-fashioned theism."<sup>2</sup> "Whatever the God of heaven and earth is, He surely can be no gentleman."<sup>3</sup> "God may draw vital strength and increase of very being from our fidelity."<sup>4</sup>

Christian Theism is also incompatible with the fashionable anti-

<sup>1</sup> Leuba.

<sup>2</sup> W. James.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>4</sup> G. H. Johnson.

## PHILOSOPHY

intellectualism. "Distrust of the intellect," says Radhakrishnan, "is the characteristic note of recent philosophy. To-day we have nothing else than contempt for the tribe of thinkers. It has become the fashion to idealize impulse over reason, sentiment over thought, and to denounce all system-making." This is not overstated. "Truth," says William James, "is merely a preliminary means to other vital satisfactions." "It is a mark of great coarseness," says Le Roy, "to wish to be right. It shows a great want of culture." "All our decisions," says James again, "have as their sole meaning a better promise for the world's outcome. Be they false or be they true, the meaning of them is their meliorism." This is pragmatism, the doctrine that we may believe what we choose as our beliefs at our own risk, since truth has no other meaning than what suits us. "An idea," says Vaihinger, the author of the notorious *Philosophie des Als-ob*, "in spite of its theoretical nullity, may have great practical importance."

This looks like the extreme of scepticism. It is quite inconsistent with the Christian belief in the Holy Spirit, whose gifts are "wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord." It denies either the existence of absolute truth or our power of reaching it. Plato's brave act of faith that the wholly real is wholly knowable, though not wholly known, is far nearer the Christian position. We may wonder that philosophers should so utterly condemn and distrust the instrument with which they do their work. Perhaps the main explanation is that these men have made the elementary mistake of identifying two very different faculties of the mind, those which the Greeks called *Nous* and *Dianoia*, the Latins *Intellectus* and *Ratio*. The lower reason or understanding, with which natural science does its work, is by no means to be despised or distrusted. We are often told that natural science, being an abstract study, for its own purposes disregards all the higher values. This is not true. Science is a disinterested pursuit of truth, which is an ultimate value. But it is an abstract study, because it is concerned only with quantitative measurements, which are not applicable to intellectual and spiritual realities. What the Greeks called *Nous* and the schoolmen *Intellectus* is the whole personality acting under the guidance of its highest part, a faculty which, as Plotinus says, all possess though few use. The Platonic *Nous* is almost the same as the Pauline *Pneuma*, and I think we may say with the Indian *Atman*. It is the Soul become Spirit, the self transfigured in a life of discipline by the indwelling Spirit of God, which Christians, following St. Paul, identify with the Spirit of Christ, whose last words on earth, according to the Gospel of Matthew, were, "Lo, I am with you all the days, even to the end of the world." The Soul become Spirit has not renounced the duty and

privilege of earnest thinking, which makes us men. William James congratulates Bergson for having finally killed "that beast," the intellect. Such language is unworthy of a philosopher, unless he has quite misunderstood the meaning of "intellect." Pragmatism has the sin of wilful self-deception, though some of its adherents, like Schiller of Oxford, were really very honest thinkers. Pascal's words, *il faut s'abêtir*, have shocked many of his admirers; I do not think that they fairly represent his position. The submission of the intellect, demanded by Catholics, is another thing. No one has protested more energetically against the prevalent anti-intellectualism than the ablest Catholic writers; but Catholicism is a religion of authority, exacting obedience like that of soldiers on a campaign. Catholics are not willing to admit that events in the past and future, like the creation of the world in time and the day of judgment, cannot be supernaturally revealed.

When Bergson says that the superficial ego is intelligence and the profound ego is intuition, he ought to have said that the superficial ego is reason and the profound ego is intelligence.<sup>1</sup> From this initial misunderstanding the confusion continues in all his writings. He has a sympathy with mysticism as an intuitional type of religion; but though many mystics have not been philosophers, nothing can be more alien to the spirit of mysticism than to base faith on the wish to believe. Faith begins as an experiment and ends as an experience; but though the truths which religious experience reveals to us are not within the purview of natural science, they are assuredly within the province of the intellect, if we know what the word means.

Pantheism, as expounded in Pope's *Essay on Man*, "as full, as perfect, in a hair as heart," is of course incompatible with Theism. Reality is a kingdom of values, and values are essentially hierarchic. Some Indians, and certainly Emerson, who was much under their influence, have sought to attain unity by wiping out all distinctions, an error which has inevitably lent itself to caricature. Krause was the first to coin the word panentheism, the doctrine of divine immanence, in contrast with pantheism. Panpsychism, the theory that all things are in various degree possessed of life, is not inconsistent with theism. The difficulty of reconciling the world of values, which must contain negative as well as positive values, with the neutral world as known to science, must be dealt with briefly when we come to the problem of evil. The man of science has no right to blame the parasite or to lecture the cuckoo; but it may be that perception, as distinguished from sensation, always has an element of valuation.

Immanence, as opposed to identification, implies transcendence. It also implies that the world of space and time, in which we live

<sup>1</sup> Sheen, *God and Intelligence*, p. 64.

and within which we have experience of the presence of God, is not sundered from reality. The world as we know it is only a shadow of the world as God knows it, but as the Quaker Isaac Penington says, "though every truth is shadow except the last, every truth is substance in its own place, though it be but a shadow in another place. The shadow is a true shadow as the substance is a true substance." Some thinkers, like Spinoza, have been accused of atheism, though they might more plausibly be accused of acosmism. The modern disciples of Heracleitus, like Bergson, who picture the world as a perpetual flux, a shoreless ocean in which all is movement without anything that moves, and the modern disciples of Parmenides, among whom we may reckon Bradley on one side of his thought, are in danger of reducing appearance to an appearance of nothing. The latter deny real change and real movement, and give us a world in which nothing happens. For Plato, time is a moving *image* (εἰκών not εἶδωλον) of eternity. The image must resemble its archetype as far as its nature allows. The sensible world is, we may say, a sacrament of the intelligible world. The monism which makes the eternal world alone real sucks all the reality out of our pictures of the spiritual. Nirvana has no qualities. In grasping at infinity these thinkers find only zero. Some Christian mystics have followed the "negative road" too far.

Among all else which threatens to disappear under this treatment is personal existence. The problem of personality is exceedingly difficult. The ancients needed no word for it, and on the whole I agree with those who have said that the importance of self-consciousness has been over-emphasized in modern philosophy. Our personality is in the making; Lotze says that personality in the full sense is an attribute of God only. Keyserling in his admirable early book *Unsterblichkeit* says that mysticism always ends in an impersonal immortality. This judgment must not be disregarded; but impersonal is a negative word, and personality has no well defined meaning. From the point of view of the present essay the most important question is this. The spiritual life is a growth or transformation of the soul into spirit, and the Spirit of God is one. "We are all made to drink into one Spirit." The mystics have always made union with God their ideal. The dialectic of mystical philosophy demands that since reality (the intelligible world) is a unity in duality of thought and its object, we must think of an absolute unity "beyond existence" in which even this duality is transcended. In rare moments of ecstasy, many of them thought, we may even pass out of our finite selves and be "alone with the Alone." Such rare and transient experiences cannot be judged by those who have not had them. Personally I do not think that we can ever lose ourselves so completely as this. I value the words of Plotinus, who himself believed in

the possibility of such a state: "to try to rise above *Nous* is to fall outside it." But the question which I wish to put is this: do we in prayer and meditation ever leave behind the "I" and "Thou" relation in our approach to God? When we speak of personality in God—we had better not say that God is a Person—is not this what we mean—"Speak to Him now, for He hears, and spirit with spirit can meet; closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet"? If "God is love," love is an ultimate, and if personality can be transcended, love is not an ultimate, for we cannot love ourselves, even if we believe that we do not exist. "Mike, have you seen Tim lately?" "Yes, I saw him yesterday, on the opposite side of the street. But when we got to the middle of the road, faith, it was neither of us." The two Irishmen cannot have found much to say to each other after that discovery. From my own poor experience I should say that prayer is neither a dumb-bell exercise nor a soliloquy.

We are addressing a Being who is not ourselves but with whom we can have communion. "In Heaven" our personalities remain distinct though not separate. Spiritual growth enlarges our circumference without abolishing our centre.

One of the chief difficulties in accepting Theism comes from the failure to follow Eckhardt in distinguishing between the Godhead and God. Eckhardt in his popular preaching speaks of them as if they were separate Beings, which was not his intention. But it is important to recognize that the God of religion is not the Absolute who "dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto." The God whom we worship is God as He reveals Himself to us in His attributes as perfect Goodness or Love, Truth, and Beauty, and with whom we may have communion in prayer. It is strange how much confusion has been brought into philosophy by not acting on this obvious truth. For example, many modern commentators on Neo-Platonism represent the Plotinian Absolute whom that philosopher calls the One, the First Principle, or the Good (the Perfect would be a better translation, since moral goodness is not thought of in the Supreme) by the word God which Plotinus does not use of the Absolute. The result of this gratuitous mistake is to throw the whole philosophy out of gear. The goal of the Platonist is certainly not to "swoon into nothingness." His heaven is not Nirvana, but the full and rich realm contemplated by Spirit, our own world apprehended in its complete meaning. It would be a mistake to compare the so-called Platonic Trinity—the Supreme, the Intelligence, and the Soul of the World, with the Christian Trinity; but there are resemblances. The attributes of the Logos are very much like those of the Platonic *Nous*, especially if with St. Paul we regard the

\* Goethe says, "Der Professor ist eine Person, Gott ist keine."



glorified Christ and the Spirit as One Being. In the later dogmatic controversy the Church decided that no divine honours were too great to be paid to Christ in His relation to the Father. St. Paul, as is well known, taught that as the result of His self-sacrifice for man He was invested with higher honours—"equality with God"—than He had before. This is contradicted in the Fourth Gospel. Some have thought that a consistent Platonist would have been content with the Arian Christ. But I wish to insist that we think on different levels. On what St. Paul calls the psychic level, on which we mostly live, we see everywhere that tension—"like that of the bow or the lyre," as Heraclitus says, that strife of contending principles which some modern thinkers would have us regard as ultimate truth. In this sphere "we see not yet all things put under God"; "the prince of this world" is, for the Johannine Christ, the devil. On the level of Spirit, the battle is already decided, but this is not the "vale of soul-making" in which our probation is passed. As for the sphere of the Godhead, "whom no man hath seen or can see," we are wiser to say nothing. It is in the second plane, not in the first or the third, that "reality" is to be found. The Absolute is beyond existence; the world of space and time is the real world polarized and displayed in an imperfect medium. In thus admitting the imperfection of our knowledge, we are making no concessions to irrationalism. There is nothing irrational in recognizing that there are many things which we neither know nor can expect to know. Providence gives us enough light to live by; our needs are provided for, but not our curiosity.

What do we mean by revelation? We mean a truth, or a body of truths which we could not arrive at ourselves, but which is imparted to us by an authority which we are bound to regard as infallible. Historically, within the life of the western nations, four seats of authority have been recognized; the dogmas promulgated by an institutional church, which claims to be protected against error by divine inspiration; a sacred book, dictated by supernatural wisdom and immune from error in all its parts; the discoveries of human reason, for a time in logical argument and then in the progress of natural science; and what is called the inner light or the testimony of the Holy Spirit. I postpone the discussion of this last till I come to the ontological argument. The other three are now generally admitted to be indefensible. I need say no more about the infallible Church and the infallible book. The conflict between religion and science in the nineteenth century was a battle between dogmatic materialism and materialistic dogmatism. Both, we may hope, are dead and buried. No philosophy can be erected on materialism, a world-view illegitimately based on naïve realism, and now abandoned by the ablest leaders in the natural sciences. Biology and psychology are not content to be brought under the laws of the inorganic world.

Matter itself has been defecated to a transparency. Relativity has brought uncertainty into the arguments of Euclid and even of Newton. The very existence of laws of nature has been called in question; they are alleged to have only statistical validity. Incidentally I deprecate the attempts of some religious apologists to make capital out of "indeterminateness." Those who try to find God in gaps will be in a tight place when the gaps begin to close. On the other side it should by this time be plain that suspensions of the laws of nature require a proof which for events of long ago is not available, and that if they could be established they prove nothing of value for religion. Miracle may be, as Goethe said, the dearest child of faith; it can never be the parent of faith in the higher religion.

What subjects are capable of being revealed, in the sense I have given to the word? Events in the past and in the future cannot be so revealed. *Mundum incepisse sola fide tenetur*, says Thomas Aquinas. How could such a fact be revealed? I do not think that Christ ever claimed to reveal facts about the future. If He was fully man, as we believe, He knew no more about the future than we do. That He was willing to accept the current Hebrew ideas about Paradise, Hades, and Gehenna need not surprise us. All eschatology is symbolic; from the nature of the case it must be so. This means of course that I regard the time-honoured proof from prophecy, which was the sheet-anchor of primitive Christian controversy against the Jews, and which has obviously modified in several places the narrative of the Gospels, as wholly worthless. Attempts are now being made to establish the possibility of "precognition." I do not believe a word of it.

Are we then to admit that there is no such thing as revelation? I am far from thinking so. In the first place there is the solid and coherent evidence of the mystics, who have had visions of God in many different parts of the world, in many periods, and in many religions. I have studied their testimonies for many years, and they are far too cogent, and far too similar to each other, to leave any room for doubt that they are what they claim to be. Their descriptions are often indistinct; how should they not be? A man can hardly be inside and outside the mystical state at the same time; he is attempting to describe what language was never meant to express. But he knows that the vision was authentic. As for the objection that the value of this testimony is subjective and not transferable, it is nonsense. As I have said before, if a dozen honest men tell me that they have climbed the Matterhorn, I am satisfied that the summit of that mountain is accessible, though I shall never get there myself. We are not all equally gifted as contemplatives, any more than as musicians. But want of attention is the chief obstacle. The still small voice does not shout at us. If we spend a perfunctory

## PHILOSOPHY

five minutes a day in thinking about God and the spiritual world, what can we expect? The testimony of the mystics cannot establish Christianity, but it is a strong and I think sufficient argument for Theism, since all the contemplatives are agreed that what they have experienced was not a figment of their own imagination, but spiritual communion with a living Being.

But besides this, I maintain that some of the attributes of ultimate reality are revealed to us in what are called the absolute or intrinsic values, Goodness, Truth, and Beauty. There is good authority for this belief. Windelband says: "Logical, ethical, and aesthetic values make up the entire range of the human value-activity which can lay claim to general recognition and the necessity of actual unconditionedness. In each of these provinces the empirical mind has a significance which transcends the mind itself. In its metaphysical significance it is a rational community of spiritual primary reality that transcends all experience. There can be no further universal values beyond these three." And Bradley: "Goodness, Beauty, and Truth are all there is which in the end is real. Their reality, appearing amid chance and change, is beyond these and is eternal. In whatever world they appear, that world so far is real." These are the attributes under which we know God; this is the real world in which His thoughts are objectified.

These three ultimate values are "a threefold cord not quickly broken." They have each their own characters, and cannot be either identified or made subordinate to each other. The sense of duty speaks to us in the imperative, and sets the "ought-to-be" against the "is." In this it differs from Truth and Beauty. But they are alike in this, that they depend on nothing beyond themselves; they have an absolute quality. "If a man seeks the good life for anything outside itself," says Plotinus, "it is not the good life that he seeks." Of course we may be in doubt what is our duty; we may make mistakes in seeking the truth; we may be poor judges of beauty; but when we know what is right we must do it, "in scorn of consequence"; when we know what is true we must believe it; when we know what is beautiful we must admire it. To say "where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise"; or "Evil, be thou my good"; or "Fair is foul and foul is fair," is blasphemy against the God who has under these three attributes made Himself known to us.

Some have suggested a fourth ultimate value—Holiness. But Holiness is rather the feeling of reverence which we feel towards any of the three ultimates; and Life, which Bergsonians would like to add, is not admissible as an ultimate value. There are some things which we would all die rather than do.

These are for me sufficient reasons for believing in God. God reveals himself to us by degrees. Knowledge of self and knowledge

of God proceed *pari passu*. Self-knowledge means self-transcendence. The self of the psychologist and of ordinary political and ethical theories is, as Ritchie says,<sup>1</sup> "a product of bad metaphysics and bad science." We may learn something from the Indians here. Our religion should deliver us from isolation, which is a terrible thing, and it is in and through God that we come to know ourselves, each other, and the world.

The classical four arguments, ontological, cosmological, teleological and moral, are somewhat under a cloud, but we cannot reject them as worthless, and something must be said about them.

The original form of the ontological proof was that the greatest object that we can conceive must exist, because existence is a necessary part of perfection. Every schoolboy can chuckle over Kant's remark that to have a hundred dollars in my mind is a very different thing from having them in my purse. But the argument was meant to refer only to our thought of God, not of a hundred dollars. Thomas Aquinas, as is well known, rejects the argument as sophistical, but in spite of his immense reputation only two of the schoolmen follow him in rejecting it.<sup>2</sup> Modern Catholic writers are shy of it. The Catholic doctrine is that belief in God is a "valid inference"; but that direct incontrovertible knowledge—what they call ontologism—is not to be claimed. Some of the Thomists possibly claim too much for logic and too little for inspiration. It is the nature of religious experience that we are in contact with something far beyond the categories of the understanding. "Thou criedst unto me from afar," says Augustine, "and I heard as the heart heareth." But it seems to me that the ontological argument, when rather differently stated, is valid and valuable. It is really one which Aquinas himself uses: *impossibile est naturale desiderium esse inane*. Our highest intuitions and aspirations cannot be in a conspiracy to deceive us. In every philosophy we reach a point where a man must trust himself. Strictly, the alternative is not impossible; it is only, to use a word which Lotze employs, intolerable. Pringle Pattison says very well: "that our ideals themselves should perish, that nothing worth existing should have any pledge of continuance or growth, that the world of values, in short, should have no relation to the world of facts—that is the one intolerable conclusion. Because it has nothing to do with any private hopes or fears, we feel that the refusal to entertain it is a judgment of objective validity."<sup>3</sup> The intuitive form of the argument is well developed by Lossky, the Russian philosopher.<sup>4</sup> Our minds when they are at their best turn to God; this is ground for a reasonable act of faith that God is not a will of the wisp.

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophical Studies*, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> A. E. Taylor in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia*.

<sup>3</sup> *The Idea of God*, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> *The World as an Organic Whole*, p. 79.

## PHILOSOPHY

The argument is easily combined with the mystical confidence in the inner light, and here it is worth remembering that the mystics did not regard this illumination as infallible; they warn us frequently against "the false light."

The cosmological argument from the "contingency" of the world to a first cause seems to me defective, though Taylor and others defend it. We should have to turn it and say not "because the contingent is, therefore the necessary being is," but "because the contingent is not, therefore the necessary being is." We have an almost instinctive desire to turn from the many to the one, from the part to the whole, from the doubtful to the necessary. This may be the source of the theory of a *nisus* already referred to.

The teleological argument, often called the argument from design, is treated with great respect by Kant, who calls it "the oldest, the clearest, and that most in harmony with the common reason of mankind." The word teleology should properly mean the science of the perfect, not the science of finality; it is not inappropriate to an organic view of processes. There has been an unending debate between the mechanical and the vitalistic theories of causation. It would be impossible in this short essay to give even a summary of the attempts made to establish one at the expense of the other, or to reconcile them. Between the mechanical theory that the whole is the product of the parts in mutual interaction, and the dualistic theory of intervention in the natural order by a supernatural power, comes the organic theory that the whole is ideally prior to the parts and causes the actions and reactions of which the mechanicians cannot give a satisfactory explanation. The Socrates of Xenophon uses the argument from design from the human standpoint. Plato does not encourage this argument; he pictures the Demiurge as bringing harmony out of chaos, partially imparted by natural "necessity." Aristotle does not greatly differ. He is contemptuous of the materialist atomists who ascribe the activities even of living beings to accident or chance. He believed in an immanent principle working towards an end; mechanism is the servant of teleology. This is an organic theory, but dominated by acceptance of final causes. Stoicism may perhaps be called pantheistic naturalism. "Necessity" is ubiquitous, as Democritus had said, but we must venerate the laws of nature as the laws of God. It has been said that Calvinism acknowledges only one Will in the universe. Calvinism is the Christian form of Stoicism.

Augustine makes history teleological; it is the method by which providence is to bring mankind into the City of God. This is a dangerous theory, which has led many in modern times to think that the course of events must be a progress from the worse to the better, and a progressive self-realization of an immanent Spirit.

Spinoza blames those who attribute natural phenomena, and

especially injurious events, to the will of God, and argues that an omnipotent Being cannot act purposively. But his *scientia intuitiva* recognises that the world which God has made must be good.

The Deism of the eighteenth century has now few supporters. Pope's *Essay on Man* assumes that the order of nature is ordained by God, and that all partial evil is universal good. "If plagues and earthquakes break not heaven's design, Why then a Borgia or a Catiline?" The argument of Bishop Butler's *Analogy* follows that line. It is fatally easy to turn it into an argument against natural theology instead of a defence of revealed religion. Here teleology is closely connected with the problem of evil, which remains to be considered. Voltaire's *Candide*, an ironical satire on the optimism of Leibniz, is a famous refutation of such superficial attempts to justify the ways of God to man.

Shaftesbury's aesthetic teleology is interesting as an argument for Theism from the beauty and perfection of the natural order. We cannot follow him in the complacency and confidence which we find in most writers of that cheerful period, when all problems seemed to have been solved; the appeal from the beauty of the world—and we may remember that industrialism had not yet disfigured the face of one of the most gracious parts of Europe—is quite justified. Plotinus had not forgotten Plato's belief that we may ascend from the contemplation of visible beauty to its invisible prototype. "What can be more beautiful," he asks, "than the world Here except the world Yonder?"

This is not the place to discuss the deistic school from Herbert of Cherbury to Toland and Collins. It has been unduly forgotten and disparaged, for the protest against resting faith on external authority only was sound enough. But whereas when the Cambridge Platonists said, "We oppose not reason to religion, for religion is most rational," they meant by reason *intellectus* not *ratio*, the Deists maintained that there is nothing "mysterious" in Christianity. In other words, they were rationalists who rejected Platonism and mysticism, and rationalism so interpreted easily becomes irreligious.

Attempts to reconcile mechanicism with teleology have been made by Kant, and especially by Lotze, who shows, in his own words, "how universal is the extent and how subordinate is the significance of the mechanical in the structure of the world." Without discussing this very difficult problem, I will suggest a few principles which seem to me important.

The existence of directive purpose, what Paley called prospective contrivance, in nature, as opposed to chance or accident, cannot reasonably be disputed. It is sometimes supposed that nineteenth century science was opposed to teleology. Nothing can be more untrue. Kelvin wrote: "Science positively asserts creative power.

## PHILOSOPHY

There is nothing between absolute scientific belief in creative power and the acceptance of the theory of a fortuitous concurrence of atoms." Darwin wrote: "Our minds refuse to accept the grand sequence of events as the result of blind chance. The understanding revolts from such a conclusion." Francis Darwin said: "One of the greatest services rendered by my father to the study of natural history is the revival of teleology." Asa Gray said: "Let us recognize Darwin's great service to natural science in bringing back to it teleology." Huxley, too, recognizes that there is a wider teleology which is not touched by the doctrine of evolution, but is actually based on the fundamental proposition of evolution.<sup>1</sup> Divine power may be adduced to account for everything or nothing; it cannot be called in to account for some things and not others. Science cannot work with such a dualism.

Directive purpose is sometimes below, sometimes within, and sometimes above consciousness.

Purpose belongs to the time-series, within which God carries out His finite acts of will. In eternity there are no unfulfilled purposes.

The notion of a single purpose in creation is untenable. What connexion can there be between happenings on our planet and those on another inhabited world a million light years away from us? The universe was not created for our sakes. Every purpose is necessarily finite, with a beginning, middle, and end. An everlasting purpose is everlastingly frustrate. To say that God foreknows what is going to happen does not imply that it could not have happened otherwise. Foreknowledge is not the same as predestination.

The teleological argument has a real value against the notion that no *mind* is discernible in nature. I do not think we need be disturbed by recent opinions that the laws of nature are only statistical, and that in the ultimate elements of matter real indeterminacy may prevail. Planck warns us against the attempt to rehabilitate chance. But this argument does not lead us all the way to the God of religion, for nature's contrivances are not always beneficent; nature shows no signs of moral purpose.

The moral argument, which alone is fully accepted by Kant, is on a different footing, because moral obligation depends on one of the ultimate values, which stand in their own right, and are, as theists believe, a real revelation of the nature of God in relation to His creatures. No more need be said about it here.

We come lastly to the difficulties in the way of theistic belief. There are some questions which we cannot answer and must leave alone. We do not know why there is a world. We do not know the relation between the Godhead as absolute and the creation, though

<sup>1</sup> Alfred Noyes, *The Unknown God*, pp. 68 seq.

we must decisively reject the popular theory that God is "organic with the world" and has no reality outside that relation.

We do not know whether Space and Time, whether taken separately or together, are finite or infinite, or whether Kant's "antinomy" is in its nature insoluble. I am disposed to think myself that Space and Time in themselves have no qualities, being the warp and woof of the canvas on which we draw pictures of external reality.

We are unable to picture the eternal and spiritual world except under symbolic forms which we know to be inadequate and often misleading.

That the external world is sacramental, a "moving image" of the spiritual world, we believe; but how, if at all, do events in time affect—we may say alter—the world above time and space? They are not two separate worlds, but we do not fully understand the relation between them.

These are examples of problems which do not invalidate our belief in God, because they are plainly beyond our knowledge, and we have no claim to know things which do not concern us as human beings. But there is one great problem which does trouble us because we think we ought to know the answer to it, and we are not satisfied with the answers which are made. This, I need not say, is the problem of evil. There is no doubt that this is the great obstacle to faith in the minds of our contemporaries. It has become more urgent in consequence of the terrible events of the last thirty years, which have brought home to us, as never before, the extremities of human wickedness and human suffering which from time to time are disclosed on the pages of history. It will therefore be necessary to consider this problem at some length, though we shall not be able to offer any complete solution of it. To expose the inadequacy of some answers which have been given may make the nature of the problem more clear.

The problem has been stated plainly and candidly by Augustine. "Either God is unwilling to abolish evil or He cannot. If He is unwilling, He is not good; if He cannot, He is not omnipotent." Lucretius says that the world cannot be directed by divine power; it is so full of faults—*tanta stat prædita culpa*. Mill, in a well-known passage, refuses to call any Being good who is not what he means by good when he applies the word to his fellow-creatures; and if there is a Being who can send him to hell for not so calling him, "to hell I will go." And, he says: "in sober truth, nearly all the things which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing to one another are nature's everyday performances. Nature has hundreds of hideous deaths in reserve, such as the cruelty of a Domitian never surpassed. All this nature does with the most supercilious disregard both of mercy and of justice."



But for whom is evil a problem? Science is morally neutral. It describes and sometimes tries to explain; but to justify the ways of God to man is none of its business. It is not a problem either for optimists or pessimists. The former is a barometer stuck at set fair; the latter is a barometer stuck at stormy. No sensible man would give sixpence for either of them. The optimist, we are told, is a man who would buy from a Jew and sell to a Scot and expect to make a profit; the pessimist is a man who of two evils chooses both. The former shouts with Browning, "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world"; the latter agrees with Schopenhauer that this is "a really wicked way of thinking, a bitter mockery of the unspeakable misery of humanity." From this latter point of view one might write a plausible essay on "The Problem of Good." Optimism and pessimism are largely temperamental. The optimist is usually satisfied not so much with the world as with himself; sometimes, however, he sings to keep up his spirits. The pessimist, if he is not neurotic, is a man who dislikes being disappointed; life for him may be a series of pleasant surprises. Different types of pessimism, due to very different causes, may be studied in von Hartmann, Leopardi, James Thomson, Cowper in his fits of religious mania, and Thomas Hardy.

Nor is evil a problem for the Manichean or Zoroastrian, for whom God and the Devil are pitted against each other in a never ending battle. Good and evil are equally real; "in yes and no all things consist." Reality is so constituted. For the theist evil is a problem, perhaps the greatest of all problems. Let us consider briefly the solutions which have been offered. "What we call moral goodness is a human attribute, and not a divine." God is not solely a moral Being; He has other interests which do not concern us. For morality, we are told, evil is unconquered; for religion God is supreme. No doubt this is true, and the distinction already insisted on between the God with whom we have communion and the Absolute must here be remembered. The outcome of this view is the complete resignation to a power which seems to be neither just nor merciful. This is the moral of the book of Job. But even this noble poem ends like a Victorian novel. The patriarch recovers his prosperity, and is consoled for the loss of his first family by the presence of the three ladies Dove, Cassia, and Eye-paint. Akin to this attitude is the proud submission of Stoicism and Calvinism. The pot has no rights against the potter. This creed does not discourage benevolence, but it does extinguish pity, which can hardly be felt by God, if He wills the existence of beings who are only unhappy means to an end which does not interest them. Stoical courage may end in Promethean defiance, like that of Bertrand Russell's *A Free Man's Worship*.

The most terrible aspect of this treatment of evil is not as an explanation of earthly suffering, to which a brave man may steel

himself, but in the acceptance of an eschatology which outrages our feelings of what we have a right to expect from a God who has revealed Himself as love. We are sometimes amazed to find in Christian casuistry no mention of cruelty among the deadly sins. But such as men are, such will God appear to them to be; and the converse is equally true. Dante has no doubt that divine "love" created his horrible inferno, for the inmates of which "there is no hope of death." *Questi non hanno speranza di morte*. Christian apologists must not extenuate the appalling evils wrought by the doctrine, held with equal determination by Catholics and Protestants, that an immense number, probably the majority of mankind, are doomed to an eternity of unimaginable torture. St. Thomas Aquinas thought that the spectacle of these torments will augment the happiness of the saved; Peter Lombard says the same; Jonathan Edwards says: "the view of the misery of the damned will double the ardour of the love and gratitude of the saints in heaven." "You cannot stand" (says this amiable divine) "before an infuriated tiger; what will you do when God rushes upon you in his wrath?" "God holds sinners over the mouth of hell like so many spiders; He hates them and will trample them beneath His feet with inexpressible fierceness." This dreadful fate awaits all who do not belong to the "true" Church. The Romish "popular catechism" of Cardinal Perrone says that Catholics who become Protestants "are damned irremediably for all eternity." Their virtues will not avail them at all.

I know that these doctrines may be supported from some passages in the New Testament; but I do not think that the future has been or can be revealed to man, and I do believe that Christ came to reveal God as love. In the Church of England, at any rate, these threats have withered away, and I am far from regretting it.

Traditional Christian eschatology is horribly cruel and unjust. Surely we are all "over bad for blessing and over good for banning." Such doctrines only aggravate the problem of evil. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" is a question which rings through the whole of the Old Testament, and there can be only one answer to it. As regards future compensation for the ills of this world, we know very little; but surely both reward and punishment must be *in pari materia*. We cannot really picture beatified spirits living in a state of "solid comfort," in the words of a nineteenth century hymn, still less indulging in "the shout of them that triumph, the song of them that feast." And the penalty for being a bad man is to become a worse man, not to be baked in an oven. We can understand the wish of religious teachers to paint the choice between good and evil in bright and lurid colours, but I am convinced that these crude symbols do more harm than good. The Russian theologian and philosopher S. L. Frank says: "There is not the slightest need

## PHILOSOPHY

for me to try and peep into the future of my soul after death, and this indeed is impossible, to say nothing of the fact that the word future loses all definite meaning when applied to what lies beyond the confines of earthly time. I know with complete certainty now that I am eternal."<sup>1</sup>

A favourite solution is that God is not omnipotent. He may be limited by spiritual powers of evil, who will ultimately be defeated (modified dualism), or obstructed by some intractable material, such as "matter." Or He may be only *primus inter pares*, partially dependent on the cooperation of souls, who according to some theories are co-eternal with Himself.

Those who believe that God is "organic with the world," and that He has no existence apart from the creation, are almost obliged to adopt one of these explanations. For the Christian, none of them is acceptable or necessary. We do not know how or why God created an imperfect world; we cannot expect to know. But it is plain that we have to live in a world of tension, forces pulling against each other, and that but for this strife, on which Heracleitus laid so much stress, we could hardly be moral or intelligent beings. In the spiritual life we can "ascend in heart and mind" to a higher plane of reality; but while we live here, "on our probation" as Christians say, we are combatants in the arena. As William Blake says:—

"Joy and woe are woven fine,  
A clothing for the soul divine.  
It is fit it should be so;  
Man was made for joy and woe;  
And when this we rightly know  
Safely through the world we go."

Another expedient is to deny the reality of evil, which is said to be only negative, a *privatio boni*. We have mentioned the shallow assertion that all partial evil is universal good. We are reminded that a good picture contains shade as well as light, and it is suggested that what seems to us evil may enhance the beauty of the whole. This was urged by Soame Jenyns in his *Free Enquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil*, (1757): "The beauty and happiness of the whole depend on the just inferiority of the parts." The book is remembered now by the indignant protest of Dr. Johnson: "The author and Pope perhaps never saw the miseries which they imagine thus easily to be horne." There may, Jenyns thinks, be "numberless intermediate beings who have power to deceive, torment, or destroy us for the ends only of their pleasure or utility." Johnson replies: "Many a merry bout have these frolick beings at the vicissitudes of an age,

<sup>1</sup> *God with us*, p. 50.

and good sport it is to see a man tumble into an epilepsy, and revive and tumble again, and all this he knows not why. As they are wiser and more powerful than we, they have more exquisite diversions, for we have no way of procuring any sport so brisk and so lasting as the paroxysms of the gout and stone, which must undoubtedly make high mirth, especially if the play be a little diversified with the blunders and puzzles of the blind and deaf."

Idealists who believe in an immanent Absolute have argued that evil needs only to be supplemented and rearranged, in order to take its place in the universal order. This theory is hard enough to believe when we consider the undeserved sufferings—not of ourselves but of others. But when we are asked to regard moral wickedness as the mere negation of good, such a notion is quite opposed to our experience. Pope's chosen villains, a Borgia or a Catiline, were not merely imperfect men. Some of the worst men—we may choose, if we prefer it, Nero, Ivan the Terrible, or Goebbels, have not been nugatory characters at all. Whatever a metaphysician may say, a moralist must admit that disvalues are as positive as values. This does not mean that the bad have no redeeming qualities. Perhaps none is utterly bad. "Wickedness is always human, being mixed with something contrary to itself," says Plotinus. "To step aside is human," says Robert Burns. The mystics, as is well known, are agreed that at the centre of the soul there is a "spark which never consents to evil." Even Tertullian, who was no mystic, agrees that "there remains the original good of the soul, which is akin to it and in the true sense natural. For that which is from God is not so much extinguished as obscured. In the worst there is something good, and in the best there is something of the worst." This however does not imply that "all will be saved at the last," a belief which is condemned by our Articles of Religion, but is very widely held now, since many Protestants have virtually changed hell into purgatory in which they profess not to believe. A man may lose his soul, but not the soul which would have been his if he had not been a bad man. The "*bon Dieu*" whose *métier* it is to pardon everybody is not the God of Christianity.

I am inclined to think that all the Greeks, including the Platonists, made too little of the evil of sin. Their word *hamartia* means properly a bad shot. Purification for them was like scraping off the dirt from a statue. The real self is sinless. The later Neoplatonists thought that their master Plotinus went too far here. "If the will sins," they asked, "how can the soul be sinless?" Mystical philosophy tends to an ultimate monism, and is in danger of reducing happenings in time and place to an unreal phantasmagoria. This may lead to an apparent heartlessness in contemplating such disasters as are now troubling the world. "What matters it? The actors change

## PHILOSOPHY

their masks; that is all." Our wounds cannot be healed so slightly as this.

The "offence of the Cross," which is "foolishness to the Greeks," as St. Paul says, points to a partial solution of the problem. Vicarious suffering, not vicarious punishment, is a law of life. If God is love, He must reveal Himself in the supreme activity of love, in self-sacrifice. We do not fall into the error of "Patripassionism" when we say that the self-sacrifice of Christ was the act of a Divine Being. If the most sublime manifestation of the Divine nature in relation to His creatures is not power or justice but love, this must also be our ideal. Our religion, unlike most of the higher religions and philosophies, does not promise to make us invulnerable. Love often hurts. Love makes no claims for compensation; love offers itself willingly. Nor must we make any demands for individual justice from God. The Christian regards it as a privilege to "fill up, for his part, what was lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for His Body's sake." There is no thought here of a forensic transaction. Rather, we discard altogether the monadism which regards the self of our surface consciousness as a "windowless" entity, like the atoms of Lucretius, *solida pollentia simplicitate*. Personality is an ideal; the self-centred individual is not yet a person. Plotinus himself says that the indifference of the soldier to death proves that the soul knows itself to be immortal. I think this is true.

It is a hard lesson. Even the holiest may for a moment think that God has forsaken him, and more often that God has forsaken the world. But in communion with God we rise above these doubts—St. Paul, who had little enough to encourage him in the heroic enterprise which made him a greater conqueror than Alexander, could rejoice in the confidence that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh in us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things that are seen but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Alfonso the Wise, of Spain, once said that if the Creator had consulted him he could have suggested several improvements in the world. A loud clap of thunder prevented him from putting his plans on record. The world that we know is certainly not the kind of place which we should have made if we had had the choice. But life "as it organizes itself apart from God"—Bishop Gore's definition of what the New Testament means by "the world"—is not reality as God sees it, and as His saints have seen it. We have free access to the world of eternal values, which are at least as real as the world of stars and atoms. We have faith, which is the resolution to stand or fall by the noblest hypothesis, a venture which justifies itself as we advance in the spiritual life. We have hope as an anchor of the soul,

## THEISM

hope, often disappointed but never killed, since no pure hope can ever wither except that a purer may spring out of its roots. And we have love, in which, as St. Bernard says, God reveals Himself directly and not merely symbolically, love which is stronger than death, and the hierophant of the divine mysteries. "Now we see in a glass darkly"; but we may rise, if we are willing to pay the price, *ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem*.

## DISCUSSION: (I) *Philosophy Without Science*

### I. VISCOUNT SAMUEL

The appeal is often made to our philosophers not to disregard the conclusions of natural science, when relevant to their discussions. Everyone agrees that this is sound in principle. But not everyone acts upon it in practice. I have lately been reading Prof. A. J. Ayer's book, *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge*,<sup>1</sup> and have found it a striking example of the burden imposed on philosophy when matters properly belonging to physics and physiology are discussed in terms of logic and linguistics.

Prof. Ayer's treatise opens with a section entitled, "The Argument from Illusion." In an acute analysis, extending to over fifty pages, he recalls the many examples given by earlier philosophers to show that what we perceive are never "real" material things, but only "sense-data" within our own minds. Locke, Descartes, Bradley, and some contemporary thinkers are quoted. We are reminded of the straight stick standing half in water, which the eye sees as bent; the colours of leaves and flowers which may be different for one person and for another; the strange phenomenon of mirage; the case of a man whose leg has been amputated but who still sometimes feels a pain in its foot. Prof. Ayer treats these illusions, and the theory of "sense-data" based upon them, as matters for serious philosophic study. But if these and similar cases were given to a present-day scientist to examine, his answers would show at once that they give rise to no philosophic problem, and present no "argument." The whole of this ancient controversy fades away into nothingness.

As to the stick in water, the scientist could not fail to point out that the description is incomplete. We are not merely "looking at a stick." We are seeing half a stick through the medium of air, and the other half through the media first of water and then of air. Light-rays travelling from water to air are refracted; so that, while the stick is continuous, its image on the retina of the eye is discontinuous. The ordinary man, knowing little of light-rays, media and refraction, says that he sees a bent stick. When everyone becomes familiar with the facts about light transmission, no-one will give the matter a second thought.

We say that the quality of colour belongs to the leaves of a rose-bush, which are green, and to the flowers, which are red. But science tells us that those words—"quality," "colour," "green," "red"—are nothing more than convenient, and no doubt indispensable, means invented by us to describe or to account for our own sensations. They do not indicate anything that is in the object itself. What does reside in the object is the capacity to reflect certain wave-lengths of the spectrum of white light and to absorb the rest: the surface of the leaves of the rose-bush reflecting predominantly rays of the wave-length about 5,000 angstroms and the flowers about 6,500 angstroms.<sup>2</sup> (This would be the description in accordance with wave-theory; quantum-theory would express it differently.) When a normal human eye is in the path of a stream of these rays it receives impulses—through the retina and the attached nerves—which give rise to impressions in the brain that we term

<sup>1</sup> Published by Macmillan & Co., 1949.

<sup>2</sup> Or  $1/20,000$  and  $1/15,400$  of a centimetre.

## PHILOSOPHY WITHOUT SCIENCE

"seeing something green," or "seeing something red." A "colour-blind person"—one whose ocular organ is abnormal—may not be able to distinguish between those two regions of wave-length; he is subject to the "illusion" that the leaves and the flowers are the same "colour."

Again, Prof. Ayer says that "when a man sees a mirage in the desert, he is not thereby perceiving any material thing; for the oasis which he thinks he is perceiving does not exist." But he is perceiving material things; only they are perceived in an unusual fashion—distorted or magnified or reflected. I have myself several times observed mirages in the deserts of the Middle East. The lakes that appear so realistic are reflections of the sky, and the supposed palms in the distance are magnifications of sparse groups of little stick-like plants, with tufted tops, in the foreground. Anyone who will take the trouble to read the page of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* which deals with Mirage will find that such appearances are the consequence of abnormal heating of the sand, causing the neighbouring air to expand; so diminishing its density and altering its "refractive index." The reasons, with diagrams, are given for the astonishing phenomenon that results. Any traveller may see it whenever the special conditions of landscape and atmosphere are present.

Ask any physiologist how it is that a man can feel a pain in his foot although it had been amputated, perhaps years before: he will explain that, normally, certain nerve-threads, running from the foot through the leg to the spinal column, convey to the brain, when there is some injury, a sensation of pain; this pain the mind has learnt by experience to refer to the foot. After that nerve-thread has been severed by the amputation, any irritation that may occur higher up in the body, but along the same nerve-path, will give rise to a similar sensation, and the mind, wrongly but naturally, will continue to attribute it to a now non-existent foot.

It is not surprising that in pre-scientific times philosophers, grouping such mistakes together, should have founded upon them an "Argument from Illusion," and have built up a formidable metaphysical problem of "Appearance and Reality." But it is surprising that nowadays thinkers should continue a discussion that is obsolete.

In a later section of the book,<sup>1</sup> Prof. Ayer examines the question of "sense-data" in connection with sounds. But he does not stay to consider what sounds actually are. Had he taken as his starting-point the fact that a human voice-organ, or a musical instrument, or whatever it may be, is so constructed as to be able to set up rhythmical vibrations in the atmosphere, and that the human ear is so constructed as to receive those air-waves and to transmit corresponding sensations through appropriate nerve-fibres to the brain, he would at once have realized that to discuss the matter as a subject for philosophic reasoning is beside the mark. The word "sound" like the word "colour," does not describe anything actually extant in the objective universe. It is one of our verbal devices for summing-up the total effect of some purely physical events—a series of electro-magnetic radiations, or air vibrations, or the like—when combined with a receiving mind and the sensory apparatus that serves it. Let the radio be left on in a room with nobody there, and there would no longer be any "sounds" in the room, only certain air-vibrations. A dictaphone left there might make a record of the vibrations, but it would not "hear" them. In the same way, there are obviously no "sounds" in a telephone wire which is transmitting a conversation: intermittent electric currents travel along the wire and actuate the diaphragm in the receiver, reproducing there the sets of air-vibrations which have emanated from the human voice and

<sup>1</sup> Pages 252-58.



# PHILOSOPHY

have actuated the transmitting diaphragm, and the ear senses the new set of vibrations.

Apart from the ear there are no sounds. If human beings, and all other organisms, were deaf, it is plain that there would be no sounds; and if blind, no colours. Probably nature has many manifestations for which we have no words, because we are not aware of them, having no sense-organs able to detect them, even with the aid of lenses and electrical and other appliances.

The scientific approach gives us a simple answer to another of the problems which have vexed abstract philosophers—whether "sense-data" are each of them private to a single observer,<sup>1</sup> or whether they are "public." The scientist would say that the electro-magnetic radiations of light or heat, the air-vibrations of sound, the minute material particles conveying odour, the inter-atomic attractions which make things "solid," and the like—all these are there for everybody; they would still be there "When there's no-one about in the Quad." On the other hand, the sensations of a mind, through eye, ear, nose or finger, are individual. At the originating end the events are common and public, and the same for everyone. At the perceiving end they are personal and private, and may differ according to idiosyncrasy.

To quote one other example: in the course of a chapter on Causality and Perception, Prof. Ayer examines a proposition, put forward by the late Prof. G. F. Stout, that in order to explain "causality" it is necessary to bring in the notion of "active tendency." "The illustration that he (Prof. Stout) gives to show how he would make use of this notion is that of a stretched bow. 'We say that there is a tendency for the bow to unhand.' " From this Prof. Stout ultimately deduced "the conclusion that 'it is required that mind shall through and through enter into the constitution of nature.' "

Prof. Ayer does not accept this thesis; but he rejects it only after several pages of respectful examination; meeting Prof. Stout on his own ground, recurring to Hume's ideas on Causation, and treating the whole subject as one proper for logical analysis. Yet is it not clear that the problem presented by a stretched bow is simply an inquiry as to the nature of elasticity? Many substances possess that property, in varying degrees. Wood is among them; as we may observe every time we see the branches of the trees swaying in the breeze. The problem, being one of molecular arrangement and attraction, is for the physicist and chemist, and not for the philosopher. It has, in fact, been exhaustively studied by industrial chemists, particularly in relation to the molecular composition of rubber. The outcome has been the invention of synthetic rubber. Would Prof. Stout have held that a hand of rubber, natural or artificial, stretched round a bundle of papers, exhibits some metaphysical "tendency" to contract, which is to be accepted as evidence that "mind enters through and through into the constitution of nature?" The case of the stretched bow is no different. To speak of a "tendency in" the bow is sheer scholasticism—very belated three hundred years and more after Francis Bacon published the *Novum Organum*.

When the question is asked, Do we perceive material objects directly?—the answer therefore must be, Yes; if by these words we mean what present-day knowledge tells us that they should mean. Material objects, we now know, are systems of atoms, organized into molecules, which form gases, liquids or solids; capable of emitting or reflecting electro-magnetic radiations or air-vibrations, and of attracting or repelling one another. And perception means

<sup>1</sup> Ayer, *op. cit.*, p. 2. See also pp. 153-61.

<sup>2</sup> G. F. Stout, *Mind and Matter*; and "Mechanical and Teleological Causation," *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Proceedings*, 1935. Quo. A. J. Ayer, *op. cit.*, pp. 186-99.

## PHILOSOPHY WITHOUT SCIENCE

that a mind is affected, whether consciously or unconsciously, by such material objects.

On all these matters Prof. Ayer appears ultimately to arrive at much the same conclusions as the scientific approach would have led to<sup>1</sup>—but at the cost of how much mental labour, after the fatigue of how many circuitous wanderings! It is surely a mistake to pay attention to the speculations of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philosophers, and none to the discoveries of nineteenth- and twentieth-century scientists; to write on "The Constitution of Material Things" and "The Elementary Construction of the Material World," as if Dalton, J. J. Thomson, Rutherford, Max Planck, and Niels Bohr had had nothing significant to tell us on those subjects. It is as though astronomers of the Ptolemaic school, who had for centuries been engaged on immensely complicated calculations of the movements of the planets and the stars, based on the assumption that all the astral bodies were being carried by "spheres" which revolved around an immovable earth—as though they had persisted with such labours for centuries more, after Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler had proved that the assumption was false; that, in fact, the astronomer himself, with his mind, his eye, and his telescope, was being whirled around, relatively to the planets and stars, on a globe that revolved daily on its axis and yearly round the sun.

This line of approach brings us to the conclusion that the true dichotomy is not between appearance and reality, as the idealist philosophers have presented it; nor yet between ideas and matter. It is rather between the material universe as related to ourselves, and the universe not so related.

There is a single physical universe constructed of atoms and their constituents, radiations, and gravitational forces—that is, of energy. Our bodies are an integral part of it. For us the universe is full, for example, of "solid" objects: that is to say, it contains systems of molecules so closely coherent that they exclude other such systems—our bodies among them. Or, as commonsense says—more simply, "it doesn't do to run your head against a brick wall." Yet we may sit in a room listening to a self-contained radio set with no outside aerial, and we realize at once that the broadcasting rays are passing through the brick walls, so solid relatively to our bodies, almost as though they were not there. Whenever we draw back our curtains in the morning we see that the window-panes are both solid and not solid—solid for ourselves, or the birds or the bees, and not solid for light-rays. Indeed, during all the centuries that men have known the use of glass they have had the clue to the whole matter literally before their eyes, if they had only known.

If I am asked whether this is anything better than a philosophy of naïve realism, I would answer—it is realism, but not naïve realism. It is realism corrected by the observations and experiments, discoveries and verifications of science.

Yet this is not to assert that science is now able to give us an answer to the whole of our problem about perception. Far from it. Science, most helpfully, takes us part of the way—and then stops. It shows us (though indeed with some gaps in the explanation) sequences such as—sun-rays, reflection of selected wave-lengths from the surface of objects, transmission through the eye, minute electric currents passing along the attached nerves, effects upon the cells in a particular area of the brain-cortex. Mind then takes over from brain. But what that last process is, science as yet can offer no explanation. It stops at the most exciting part of the story. It cannot even promise "Another thrilling instalment in our next number."

<sup>1</sup> For example, see *ibid.*, pp. 26; 57.

## PHILOSOPHY

Sir Charles Sherrington, who has pushed exploration in this field farther than any man, in his great book, *Man on His Nature*,<sup>1</sup> says: "Reference to the brain at present affords little help to the study of the mind. Ignorance of the 'how' of the tie between the brain and the mind there makes itself felt. That is no fault of those who study the mind or of those who study the brain. It constitutes a disability common to both of them. A liaison between them is what each has been asking for. That there is a liaison neither of them doubts. The 'how' of it we must think remains for science as for philosophy a riddle pressing to be read. . . . So near two concepts, space-time energy sensible, and insensible unextended mind, stand as in some way coupled together, but theory has nothing to submit as to how they can be so. Practical life assumes that they are so and on that assumption meets situation after situation; yet has no answer for the basal dilemma of how the two cohere." And in his Rede Lecture, *The Brain and Its Mechanism*,<sup>2</sup> Sherrington was constrained to say, "Strictly, we have to regard the relation of mind to brain as still not merely unsolved, but still devoid of a basis of its very beginning."

As he says, philosophy can do no better. In the final phase in perception, when mind takes over from brain, you may say if you choose that mind is dealing with "sense-data" created for it by the percipient organs, including the relevant part of the brain. But to use that term does not appear to add anything or clarify anything. It makes no difference, of course, to what is going on, and it brings us no nearer to an explanation. So long as this is so, it would appear that there is a second dichotomy to be studied. Not only are we obliged, by the requirements of our nature, to consider the material universe sometimes as it is relatively to ourselves, and sometimes as it exists—and has existed for untold aeons—irrespective of ourselves. We must also realize that there is a mental element, strangely mixed up with that material universe, but, so far as we can tell, not identical with it.

Philosophy certainly can find no answer to the brain-mind problem by going to the other extreme; by adopting the scientific approach with so much fervour as to believe, as an article of faith, that the solution is sure to be found some day in a perfected physics and chemistry. That is materialism—surely of all generalizations the crudest and least likely to be true. Watch a chess-player, cogitating for half-an-hour whether to move his queen here or his bishop there—is there any possibility that his reflections and decisions are the product merely of electric impulses and molecular combinations? Or consider the working of your own faculties as you read and think over a paper such as this: not all the Pavlov experiments on the flow of saliva in the mouths of hungry dogs will convince you that the opinions you may form as to its value or non-value are the outcome of conditioned reflexes. Bio-physics and bio-chemistry may indeed help us on the way. But it is the Bios that is important here. And what do we mean by Bios?

Flower in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies,  
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower—but if I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
I should know what God and man is.

<sup>1</sup> Cambridge University Press, 1940, pp. 240, 350.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1933, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Prof. Ayer agrees that it does not add, but thinks that it may perhaps clarify. (*Op. cit.* p. 57)

# PHILOSOPHY WITHOUT SCIENCE

## II. PROFESSOR A. J. AYER

Lord Samuel takes me to task for writing a book on the philosophical problems of perception, without paying sufficient attention to the discoveries of modern physics. He thinks that these discoveries have made it unnecessary for philosophers to go on bothering their heads with questions of logical analysis. Let them go to school with the physiologists, and then devote their energies to the unsolved problem of the relation of body and mind.

My answer to this is that Lord Samuel has clearly failed to understand what the philosophical problems of perception are. In dealing with the argument from "illusion" for example, he assumes that the philosopher is puzzled to account for such phenomena as the appearance of the bent stick in water or the pain felt in an amputated leg, and he remarks, quite correctly, that the scientist has a satisfactory explanation for them. But this is not the point at all. The philosopher dwells upon these cases of illusion, not because he is at a loss to explain them, but because they are held to refute the philosophical theory of Naïve Realism. Whether they do refute it is a matter for discussion, and I have sympathy with those, like Lord Samuel, who find such discussion laborious. But the labour cannot be avoided by a mere appeal to scientific text-books. For the discoveries of scientists are themselves based upon sense-perception. If perception were not a source of knowledge, there would be no reason to believe in any scientific hypothesis. Now I agree with Lord Samuel that we are justified in accepting the scientific picture of the external world. But how we are so justified, and what this acceptance logically involves, are philosophical questions of a quite different order from those that the scientist is concerned to answer. Lord Samuel makes the mistake of looking on the philosopher as an amateur scientist, and accordingly rebukes him for not having turned professional. If he did he would be able to give a much more up-to-date description of nature. But that is not his object. A philosophical "theory" of perception is not a theory at all in the scientific sense. It is not used in the same way as a scientific theory: it does not enable us to make any predictions that we could not have made without it. Its function is to bring out and evaluate the implications of the scientific account of the external world and of the common-sense account which, in trusting his instruments, the scientist presupposes. And since this is a question of logic and not of physiology or physics, I maintain that the proper technique for handling it is that of logical analysis.

The dangers of forsaking logic for physiology are well manifested by Lord Samuel's paper. He says of his own philosophy that "it is realism, but not naïve realism": but in fact it is not realism, and it is naïve. For I take it to be characteristic of any realist account of perception to hold that material things are directly perceived. And while Lord Samuel says that he holds this, he at once goes on to explain that what he means in this context by the word "directly" is "indirectly." According to him, the sounds and colours which we directly perceive exist only in our own minds: "the word 'sound' like the word 'colour' does not describe anything actually extant in the objective universe." Material things are "systems of atoms," and if we talk of perceiving them, what we must mean by this is that they "affect our minds" in a certain fashion. But this is to say that we do not directly perceive them. Our knowledge of them is, on this theory, wholly inferential. They are treated as the hypothetical causes of our sensations and it is held that our sensations do not themselves reveal to us the existence of an external world.

In short Lord Samuel holds a causal theory of perception. Except that he is more knowledgeable about the atom, his view is the same as that of the

## PHILOSOPHY

seventeenth century philosopher, Locke, and it is open to the same objections. For what reason can he possibly have for believing in the existence of these physical causes which *ex hypothesi* are never themselves observed? If his senses inform him only of what is going on in his own mind what evidence can he have that anything exists outside it? The scientific theories in which he puts his faith are supposed to be verified by sense-experience: but if his interpretation were correct they would not be capable of being verified at all. Lord Samuel reproaches me with paying too much attention to the views of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philosophers. But I think that he might have avoided some of the weaknesses of his own position if instead of stopping short at Locke he had considered the arguments of Berkeley and of Hume.

In rejecting the causal theory of perception, I do not wish to imply that the physicists and physiologists do not give a true account of the causes of our sensations. The question at issue is how their account is to be interpreted. And it is here that Lord Samuel seems to me naive. For he assumes that science gives a strictly literal description of an external world: and then he finds himself with two worlds on his hands, a supposed external world of scientific objects which are made inaccessible to direct observation, and our everyday world of perceptual objects which is thrust back within the mind: and in this way he makes the question how we ever come to know the truth of any scientific proposition unanswerable. It is no wonder, therefore that he is perplexed by the problem of the relationship of matter and mind. But had he been less contemptuous of logical analysis, he might have seen that the acceptance of scientific hypotheses about the causes of our sensations does not entail accepting a causal theory of perception. These scientific statements are at a different logical level from common-sense perceptual statements, and at a different level again from statements about sensations. Consequently the sense in which they refer to "objects" is different. They do not refer directly to phenomena, but this does not mean that they describe a mysterious realm of scientific objects, literally existing "outside" phenomena. The world of the scientist is a rational construction, which furnishes a means of correlating phenomena, and the scientific account of the causes of our sensations is itself an instance of such a correlation. There is thus no problem about the relationship of different worlds, common-sense and scientific, or mental and physical, or whatever the dichotomy may be thought to be. All empirical statements refer ultimately to phenomena, but they refer to them in different ways. How they do so is a question for analysis. And it is thus, rather than the compilation of a scientific encyclopaedia, that seems to me the proper undertaking of philosophy.

### III. PROFESSOR HERBERT DINGLE

I have been asked to comment from the scientific point of view on the foregoing papers by Lord Samuel and Professor Ayer. I willingly do so, but I must say at the beginning that there is unhappily no unique "scientific point of view" on these matters, the philosophies of scientists being far more diversified than their practice. This, I think, is due less to considered differences of belief than to indifference to belief. The average scientist knows from his training how to go to work, and he does so competently and critically and produces results of value; but if he is asked what ultimate significance is to be attached to the results which he produces he either refuses to answer or else replies in terms of a naïve realism which he has acquired not from his science but un-

## PHILOSOPHY WITHOUT SCIENCE

consciously from his ordinary everyday life. There are some exceptional scientists, indeed, who do seek to formulate the philosophy implied by their practice, but while the views at which they arrive show some measure of compatibility they still differ too greatly among themselves to justify the use of a phrase like "the scientific point of view." It should be understood, therefore, that the views I express here are in the last resort only my own, though I think they would be acceptable in the main to some other scientists as well.

The main purpose of Professor Ayer's book was to consider the question whether our knowledge of the "external world" should be expressed in terms of material things or of sense-data, and he reached the conclusion that this was entirely a matter of convenience. "material things" and "sense-data" were elements of two different languages between which a one-to-one correspondence could be established. If you choose the language of material things you are faced with the problem of showing how sense-data are related to them, and if you choose the language of sense-data, which Professor Ayer himself found the more convenient, you must then construct material things out of such data.

Lord Samuel maintains that the matters into which Professor Ayer is led in his discussion have already been settled by scientific inquiry, and that no useful purpose is served by treating them as Professor Ayer does. His answer to Professor Ayer's question would be that the external world consists of material things, whose structure science has largely revealed to us, and that sense-data are the effects produced in our minds by the impact on them of physical emanations from these material things. How sense-data (or our consciousness of sense-data—the distinction is negligible) arise from the arrival of the last physical impulse at the proper set of brain cells is still unknown. It is this problem, and not the obsolete one of the nature of the external world, that should chiefly engage our attention.

Professor Ayer replies that Lord Samuel's theory of perception has already been refuted by philosophers, and the problem of constructing a better one remains. It is that problem that concerns him, and while he is prepared to accept the scientific account of things he is not satisfied with a naïve interpretation of that account. He regards the scientific world as a rational construction which furnishes a means of correlating phenomena, not as a description of a mysterious realm of scientific objects literally existing "outside" phenomena. Consequently there is a question left over as to the logical relation between scientific statements, ordinary commonsense statements, phenomena and so on, and that is the question to which he addresses himself.

I confess that my preference would be to let the disputants fight the matter out to a conclusion while I stood by and cheered, but I have a promise to redeem so I will first of all state my conclusion and then try to explain it. It is that I agree with Lord Samuel that Professor Ayer has overlooked the relevance of scientific inquiry to his problem, and my ground for that view is that I hold Professor Ayer's interpretation of the scientific picture and not Lord Samuel's. I have already expressed my attitude to Professor Ayer's book in a review of it,<sup>1</sup> and do not wish to repeat myself more than is necessary. I will therefore begin by suggesting that his view (expressed in his reply to Lord Samuel but not, I believe, in his book—at least, not so explicitly) that "the world of the scientist is a rational construction, which furnishes a means of correlating phenomena, not a description of a mysterious realm of scientific objects literally existing 'outside' phenomena"—which I accept—is in-

<sup>1</sup> *Nature*, 147, 286 (1941).

## PHILOSOPHY

consistent with the conclusion of his book that the languages of material things and sense-data are, apart from convenience, equivalent.

In any rational argument we must proceed from evidence to conclusion; if the reverse also were possible the argument would be circular and therefore irrational. Now sense-data are evidence for material things, but material things are not evidence for sense-data. If I say, "There is a star up there," I can properly be asked for evidence; and if I reply, "I see a point of light, I hear my friend say that he also sees one, and when I photograph that region of space I see on the plate a small dark circle" (in other words, "I have certain sense-data") my statements are relevant, whether or not they are conclusive proof. But if I am asked for evidence for my statement, "I see a point of light," and I reply, "I see it because there is a star up there," my reply is not relevant because I can be immediately asked, "How do you know that there is a star up there?" and I can only give the circular answer, "Because I see a point of light." In short, we accept sense-data as primary, as data in fact, but we do not accept material things as data but as inferences (or constructions), which may be right or wrong (or useful or futile). Consequently Professor Ayer's conclusion that material things and sense-data are logically equivalent seems to me irrational. Whatever the relation between them may be it is uni-directional, irreversible, unsymmetrical—choose your own term. One must come before the other, and in a rational construction that one is sense-data.

If this be granted, we must regard all rational pictures of the "external world" as logical creations, and clearly various such creations are possible, between which—provided that they do, in fact, represent sense-data faithfully—our choice will be determined simply by the purpose for which we make them. Two dominate our thoughts at the present time, namely, what I may call the commonsense world and the scientific world. The commonsense world consists of material things such as chairs, stones, clouds, planets, nebulae, etc., distributed in space and enduring with a greater or less degree of permanence in time. The scientific world consists of electrons, protons, photons, sound waves, genes, the unconscious and so on, some of them eternally situated in various kinds of space. With these as ultimate constituents we build up our two worlds, and the world we work with on any given occasion is that most suited to our purpose on that occasion. If we are engaged in buying, selling, eating, drinking, playing, fighting and generally behaving as the highest of the apes, we adopt the commonsense world, and no one but an idiot would attempt to do otherwise. But if we are engaged in relating together as completely as possible the various sense-data that are our primary elements of consciousness, then the enormous success which the scientific movement has had in this effort, and the potentiality which it still appears to possess, indicate that we would be at least quixotic if at this time of day we adopted any world other than the scientific one.

I think that Professor Ayer might now agree with this, but my quarrel with his book is that in it he has not only adopted the commonsense instead of the scientific world when knowledge and not use is in question, but has also not recognized that the two worlds are so distinct from one another that the very meaning which we must attach to the word "sense-datum" is different in relation to the one from what it is in relation to the other. Before we can start to build the scientific world we must take sense-data in their most elementary form. Thus, the sense-data associated with what we call a piece of sugar are a white colour, a cubical shape, a weight, a hard feeling, and so on, and these, as primary data, are quite independent and distinct. But Professor Ayer's meaning of the word "sense-datum" in this connection would be something in which all these are combined—a complete representative, so to speak, of one per-

ception of the commonsense piece of sugar—and the way in which he constructs the sugar is to combine a large number of different perceptions—from different points of view, in different lights, etc., to use commonsense language—and extract something like the highest common factor. To this is given the name of a material thing, and it is regarded as a necessary element in every perception of the piece of sugar.

The scientific procedure is quite different. To begin with, it does not associate together the elementary sense-data involved in a perception of the sugar. On the contrary, it associates the white colour with other colours—the green of a leaf, the red of sandstone, etc.—into a field of study which it calls "optics," and it forms a conception of "light" as a means of correlating all the sense-data within that field. The cubical shape it associates with the round shape of the Earth, the conical shape of a tree-trunk, etc., into a field of study which it calls "geometry," and forms a conception of "space" as a means of correlating all the sense-data within that field. The weight it associates with the pressure of the air, the falling of rain, etc., into a field of study which it calls "mechanics," and forms a conception of "force" as a means of correlating all the sense-data within that field. And so on. The piece of sugar is not constructed at all, but all that went to the making of it is used more effectively (from the point of view of obtaining knowledge) in other ways. Perhaps the best-known example of this process is Newton's correlation of the downward motion of an apple with the elliptical motion of the Moon by means of the conception of "universal gravitation," the colour, shape, etc., of the apple and the moon having nothing whatever to do with the matter. All the conceptions so formed make up the scientific world, and in terms of these any particular sense-datum can be not only expressed but also related with any other in the same field of study, while still further research enables the initially separate fields of study to be amalgamated—as, for instance, mechanics with geometry in the theory of relativity.

When, therefore, Professor Ayer writes a book with the main purpose of resolving the philosophical problems concerning "our knowledge of the external world," and restricts his consideration to the relation between the commonsense world of material things and the not-inevitable associations of sense-data which make the construction of material things possible, he seems to me to be writing the play of *Hamlet* without the character of the Prince of Denmark. The commonsense world is merely the Bernardo of the play. It has served to introduce the problem to us, and should then fade out, for when we are engaged in knowing the external world rather than exploiting it there is no comparison between the effectiveness of the scientific approach, which in three hundred years has discovered so much, and that of the commonsense approach, of which the most imposing achievements during the preceding two thousand years were alchemy, astrology and the Ptolemaic system of astronomy (I am speaking throughout, of course, only of the realm of sense-data, not that of other parts of our experience).

I agree with Professor Ayer that he has a problem, distinct from that of the scientist, which is worthy of his attention. The scientist has to devise an external world that will represent the relations he finds between phenomena; it is not his concern to discuss the logical status of that world among the various concepts which the human mind creates, to estimate the scope and limitations of his method of procedure, or to pronounce on the implications, if any, of his findings in relation to human behaviour—to ethics, in a word. These are matters no less important than pure science, and they are matters with which the philosopher can properly be expected to deal. What can also be expected of the philosopher is that he should first acquaint himself with the true



character of the scientific achievement, and there is little evidence that he has done this. For one of the outstanding differences between the relation of percepts to the commonsense world on one hand, and that of elementary sense-data to the scientific world on the other, is that in the former there is, in the main, a direct relation between the material thing—a penny, say—and the various percepts of the penny, a relation which is quite independent of other percepts. We do not frame our concept of the penny to conform to percepts of the Hallelujah Chorus because the commonsense method of approach reveals no relation whatever between seeing a penny and hearing the Hallelujah Chorus. But in the scientific world things are entirely different. The concept of an electron is not related merely to percepts of an electron—it is, in fact, not related to them at all, because there are no percepts of an electron. It is related to sense-data in the fields of optics, electricity, magnetism, heat and so on, and the conception of an electron which a physicist holds is in part determined by phenomena in all these fields. In short, while the scientific world is derived from sense-data, there is, at the present advanced stage of development, no simple connection between a particular sense-datum and a particular scientific concept, and it is misleading to discuss the problem as though there were. It is necessary to take the scientific world as a whole and sense-data as a whole, and consider their relation comprehensively.

That this necessity is unappreciated even in the most enlightened quarters is shown in the clearest manner in Lord Russell's recent Henry Sidgwick lecture on "Physics and Experience." Unlike Professor Ayer, Lord Russell specifically takes the world of physics, and not that of commonsense, as his "external world," but he discusses it as though its relation to sense-data were the same as that of the commonsense world. He chooses, as an example, sound waves as the constituent of the physical world which corresponds to percepts of sound. Let me quote from my review<sup>1</sup> of that lecture

"It is undoubtedly right to say that the physical world is brought into being in order to account for the very dissimilar world of percepts, but it is much less accurate to say that a particular element of the physical world is brought into being in order to account for a particular percept. Sound waves were not postulated to account for hearing, for, in fact, they do not account for it any better than a hypothesis of sound particles would do. Sound waves are part of a much larger body of hypotheses formed to account for a much larger field of experience, including, for example, the connection between the 'velocity of sound' and the principal specific heats of the medium. If (as is by no means inconceivable since of the links in Lord Russell's causal chain from violin to percept the final one—from nerve disturbance to percept—is the one of which we know least, namely nothing) it should be found that the percept of hearing required sound particles rather than waves, we would not give up sound waves; they would still be needed to account for the specific heat relation, and we should probably picture something like particles carried by waves, as was proposed in the somewhat analogous dilemma concerning light. . . . The moral of all this seems to be that the construction or inference of the physical world from the world of percepts is such a complex matter, involving such an intricate network of connections, that the picking out of any single causal chain is highly artificial. Problems arising therefrom are arbitrary rather than inevitable. For instance, Lord Russell's original question: How can we infer from the world of percepts the very dissimilar world of physical objects? is at least a plausible problem, but the question: How can we infer from the

<sup>1</sup> *Proc. Phys. Soc.*, 59, 311 (1947).

## PHILOSOPHY WITHOUT SCIENCE

perceptual Sun the very dissimilar physical Sun? in so far as the dissimilarity of premises and conclusion is conceived as involving a difficulty, is not even that. At the first step, from percept to nerve disturbance, the resemblance is completely lost, and if there is a problem it is rather why the physical Sun ultimately arrived at should have recovered rather than lost so much resemblance to the percept. But it is hard to see what can be gained in any way by analysing the network into separate threads."

To sum up, then, I repeat what I said earlier, that I accept Professor Ayer's view of the general character of the relation between the "external world" and sense-data in preference to that of Lord Samuel. Nevertheless, in spite of his disadvantageous viewpoint, Lord Samuel has, I think, properly identified the weakness of Professor Ayer's treatment of his subject, which arises from failure to appreciate the significance of the scientific achievement in relation to the problem of "our knowledge of the external world." The acumen and clarity which are evident throughout Professor Ayer's work would, if properly directed, have given us a really valuable book.

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(It may be of service to readers to remind them that according to Professor Whitehead's theory there are two *modes* involved in perception; (a) Primitive causal efficacy, (b) Presentational Immediacy; and that in the normal perception of colours, sounds, tastes, etc., the two modes are fused. Before coming to a conclusion in respect of the problem of Perception, students are advised to consult Whitehead's book on *Symbolism*.—Ed.]

## DISCUSSION: (II) *A Study of History*<sup>1</sup>

The present reviewer lacks an indispensable qualification for judging an abridgment: he has not read the original. I can only say that I should not have guessed this work to be an abridgment if I had not known it to be so, and that I was inspired with confidence in the editor's care, skill, fidelity, and understanding.

I propose to review the book as though it were an original, and I hope the author will forgive me if I am sometimes betrayed into judgments which a fuller acquaintance with his work would have caused me to correct.

It seems to me an illuminating book. I don't think anyone can put it down without feeling that his eyes have been opened and his understanding widened; and if I concentrate in what follows upon certain fundamental problems which it seems to me to raise (on the bony skeleton, rather than on the flesh and blood with which it is clothed) I hope I shall not conceal the wealth of instruction and enjoyment which it offers.

Mr. Toynbee has set out to write a natural history of civilizations. There have been twenty-one civilizations in the world so far and his object is, from a comparative examination of them all, to discover the laws, if there are any, which govern the growth and decay of civilizations in general.

The new and illuminating thing about Mr. Toynbee's treatment is that although he adopts this method of natural history, he avoids some naturalist assumptions with which it has commonly been conjoined. Thus, for example, his standpoint has much in common with that of H. G. Wells, who sees human history as the latest chapter in the story of the evolution of life on this planet; but Mr. Toynbee sees clearly that human history is something more than animal life, and cannot be understood in purely biological terms. Again, his method has obvious similarities with that of the anthropologist; but he recognizes (and this is the starting-point of his whole investigation) that the twenty-one civilized societies which have appeared in the world in the last 6,000 years are not merely so many further examples of the primitive human societies which must have existed during the whole 300,000 years in which there has been human life upon the earth, and which still persist on some parts of the earth's surface. Civilizations are a different species of human society from primitive societies, and exhibit their own peculiar properties and laws. Mr. Toynbee is thus immune from the error of describing civilizations as though they were really only different forms of savagery.

Mr. Toynbee asks what is the genesis of civilization. Having shown convincingly the insufficiency of certain pseudo-biological answers<sup>2</sup>, he gives his own solution, from a clue presented by mythology. Civilizations are brought into existence by the response of a people to a challenge. The challenge may be that of physical environment (e.g. the Egyptian civilization was a response to the desiccation of Africa), but it may also arise from external enemies or from internal social problems. A civilization comes into existence when a people responds creatively to a challenge. The creative response is not the only response adapted to secure biological survival. The primitive inhabitants of Egypt, faced with loss of their hunting-grounds by the progress of desiccation,

<sup>1</sup> A. J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, abridgement of volumes I-VI by D. C. Somervell. Pp. xii and 617. Oxford University Press. Price 25s.      <sup>2</sup> Pp. 51-9, 67-8.

## A STUDY OF HISTORY

could retreat southward into the monsoon belt, and preserve their accustomed way of life by escaping the drought. Some of them adopted this solution, and it secured them survival so effectively that their descendants are living on the Upper Nile still, exhibiting to this day a social development probably unchanged since that early migration.<sup>1</sup> But the creative response was that made by those other Egyptians who moved their habitat into the Nile Valley, subdued the jungle-swamps by the works of man, and transformed their own way of life from that of hunters to that of cultivators. The Egyptian civilization sprang from this response

In a growing civilization a successful response gives rise to a new challenge, and a civilization continues in growth so long as each new challenge evokes a creative response. Breakdown of a civilization comes when the creative response fails.

Mr. Toynbee speaks of his empirical method, but like all empirical methods, it rests upon assumptions. Perhaps the most important task for a reader is to draw these assumptions to light and to consider their truth.

His story of the rise of civilizations is conceived as an epic of the achievements of man. Man is the hero of the story—Man the Pioneer, Man the Conqueror of Nature, Man the Creator. The progress of mankind is an adventure like that of scaling a steep cliff (pp. 49-50). Between the Lower and Upper Paleolithic Ages "sub-man succeeded in turning himself into man" (p. 197). Each civilization which has arisen thereafter has sprung from the striving of mankind to reach the goal of human endeavour. "The geneses of all civilizations . . . could be described in the phrase of General Smuts: 'Mankind is once more on the move'" (p. 51). Cultures, arts, sciences, and religions are "feats of human prowess" (cf. p. 93).

The essential thing about Mr. Toynbee's presupposition is that it is humanist and not theistic. He avoids the narrowness of materialism, but he will not admit the supernatural. Professor C. H. Dodd has pointed out<sup>2</sup> that there is a likeness between Mr. Toynbee's interpretation of history, and that of the Old Testament prophets. According to the prophets also, God's manner of dealing with peoples is through the challenge of an historical situation. The result depends upon their response. But the difference between Mr. Toynbee and the prophets is that for him the challenge is presented by nature (or by undirected historical forces), for them it is presented by God.

His rejection of supernaturalism shows itself throughout Mr. Toynbee's account of the growth of civilizations. The role of creator is ascribed throughout to man, not to God. Sub-man, as we have seen already, "succeeded in turning *himself* into man." The whole of civilization is due to an activity of creation, but it is man who is the creator. Even mystics, though their importance is exalted (pp. 209-16) are valued as "creative personalities," not as persons who are in touch with the supernatural. Even the Bible, which purports to be a revelation of God, is valued as a creation of man (p. 86), and the development of the "particular conception of God which is common to Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam" is described as one of "three great feats which stand to the credit of the Syriac Civilization" (the other two being the invention of the Alphabet and the discovery of the Atlantic).

The question presents itself whether this denial of the supernatural can be maintained consistently. Thus, for example, the discovery of monotheism is described as a "feat of human prowess" (p. 93) and is ranked as an "immense discovery" (p. 263). But where is the prowess if monotheism is not true? If God does not exist, how is it an "immense discovery" to come to believe that he does?

<sup>1</sup> P. 72.

<sup>2</sup> *The Bible To-day*, pp. 126ff.

## PHILOSOPHY

But if God does exist, how much must that picture of the Ascent of Man be redrawn? It is not, as Professor Hodges has shown in a penetrating pamphlet,<sup>\*</sup> that we shall be called upon to reject any of the conclusions of physical science, or of the theory of evolution or of historical research. But if God made both man and the nature which man has conquered, if he both presented the challenges and equipped man with the resources with which he has been able to meet them, and has stood at man's elbow throughout the course of his struggle, then it looks as if there has been some naïve braggadocio in the story which man has told of himself. He is more truly to be thought of not as a pioneer, but as a child. According to the naturalistic view "man is a being of great intelligence and power; he explores nature, he makes himself, he is constantly reaching out into the unknown. But on a Christian view the context is wider. As man develops away from unreflective instinct he moves not into unknown territory, but towards a higher power which was there from the beginning, and from which all intelligence and power are derived. He is not so much a pioneer as a child learning to know his parent."<sup>\*</sup> And if God created nature, man has been wrestling not only with nature, but in a sense with God also all the time. A child trying to negotiate haphazard impediments in its path is wrestling with nature; but if the impediments have been placed there by his parents to develop his resource, they serve as a point of interaction between their will and his.

It would be a false contrast to say that whereas the humanist attributes genesis and growth of civilizations to man's efforts, the Christian attributes them to God's effort. The Christian may well hold that all the civilizations which exist or have existed have been to a large extent products of man's own efforts and he may agree entirely with Professor Toynbee's account of their origin and growth. After all, it is the Christian doctrine that man has "usurped the place of God in an endeavour to order his own life after his own will" (W. Temple), i.e. that he has done exactly what Mr. Toynbee's account describes him as doing. He will differ from the Humanist in the way he judges their growth, and especially their subsequent disintegration. The Humanist thinks man is right to rely on his own efforts, and that he is fulfilling his true nature in his conquests and successes. When these give place to decay and failure, he is driven to the despair which is beginning to be the prevailing temper of our times. The Christian thinks that it is an error for man to rely on himself since he was made to rely upon God; and that all that he achieves by his own efforts will bear the marks of this fundamental error. All civilizations so far achieved come in this category. He does not therefore regard their destruction with quite the same eye as the Humanist. For the Humanist a decay of civilization represents a defeat of mankind when engaged upon his proper task; and it leaves him alone among the ruins in an alien universe. To the Christian it is the failure of an enterprise in which man's energies were misdirected; and it leaves him among the ruins, but still in God's hands, and perhaps nearer to the true goal for which he was destined.

Let us turn to Mr. Toynbee's account of the breakdown and disintegration of civilizations.

In a growing civilization the creative response has always been the work of a minority within a people. The masses conform by *mimesis*, subdued by the charm of the superior. Their conformity is not imposed by force, but adopted through attraction; which uncivilized peoples on the frontier also feel, and admire and imitate.

When the creative power fails, force takes the place of charm. The creative

<sup>\*</sup> *The Christian in the Modern University*, pp. 11-13 University Pamphlets, S.C.M. Press.

<sup>\*</sup> Hodges, *op. cit.* P. 12.

## A STUDY OF HISTORY

minority, no longer creative, becomes a dominant minority, and imposes its power upon the masses both within and without its borders. The masses feel themselves increasingly alienated, and come to form an internal and an external proletariat. The standard pattern of disintegration is a horizontal schism which splits a society into the three fractions of dominant minority, internal proletariat, external proletariat.\* Each fraction then creates its characteristic institution: the dominant minority a universal state; the internal proletariat a universal church; the external proletariat makes a hostile appearance as barbarian war-bands. The formation of a universal state represents a rally by the dominant minority to arrest the processes of disintegration (as the Roman Empire arrested the decay of the Graeco-Roman civilization). Hitherto it has never succeeded in arresting them more than temporarily (the Roman Empire succumbed at length to the sapping of its energies by the internal proletariat, which produced the Christian Church, and to the pressure of the barbarians upon its frontiers).

The same question which we raised before presents itself more strikingly when we consider Churches. Let us accept all that Mr. Toynbee tells us of their origin, that they arise when civilizations disintegrate, and draw their membership initially from those (the proletariat) who have ceased to feel the attractive power of the civilization. It will still make a great deal of difference whether we regard the church as a natural or as a supernatural society. If the former, then it is nothing but a sociological phenomenon symptomatic of decay. But those who hold that a Church is essentially a society related to a supernatural reality, though they may accept the account of historical origin, may give a different interpretation of it. They may say that peoples, like individuals, have commonly been found to turn to God when success in this world has been denied them, or has turned to ashes in their mouths. If this is so, then the Church, though it may arise from the disintegration of a secular society, will be something more than merely a symptom of disintegration, and may have a value which the secular society missed.

I do not know where Mr. Toynbee would take his stand in face of this question. There are passages which seem to treat the church as a merely sociological phenomenon. The early Christian Church, e.g., is described as "the Syriac wing of the internal proletariat of the Hellenic world" (p. 452), Christ is a "Galilean Jewish prophet" (p. 485), and in the section entitled "The Sense of Unity" (pp. 495-505) it is explained how the belief in Monotheism arises as a psychological response to the phenomena of disintegration. Indeed, I cannot help thinking that this notion is really implied in Mr. Toynbee's initial conception of his task. To set out to write a natural history of human societies assumes that human societies are natural phenomena.

But statements in other places imply quite a different conclusion. In the same section last cited, there is a reference to "the profound and elusive *truth* of the unity of God" (p. 505. *My italics*). If the unity of God is a truth, then the development of monotheism is set in quite a different light; for whatever psychological and sociological causes may have co-operated in producing the belief that God is one, there will now be besides them another ground which must in some way have contributed to it, namely the fact that God is one. Further, a society or Church, which is based on a monotheistic belief, if we grant that that belief is true, can no longer be explained as a product merely of historical causes, for its belief brings it into relation with a supernatural reality.

Other passages, especially in the latter part of the book, tend to a similar

conclusion. "The only society that is capable of embracing the whole of mankind is a superhuman *Civitas Dei*; and the conception of a society which embraces mankind and nothing but mankind is an academic chimera" (p. 496). "The Jews made the . . . tremendous discovery of the existence of the Kingdom of God" (p. 522). (This idea is described as that of a Kingdom which "is not in time at all but is in a different spiritual dimension, and . . . just by virtue of this difference of dimension, is able to penetrate our mundane life and to transfigure it") (p. 525).

These fragmentary excerpts do no justice to the passages in which the nature of religions, especially of Christianity, is treated with much penetration and it seems to me, with much truth, but they may perhaps illustrate the point of view from which these subjects are treated. This treatment implies a judgment about Churches quite different from anything which the beginning of the book prepared us for. It is not merely that the Churches are found to be creators of cultures higher than those attained by the secular civilizations, and must therefore be regarded as something more than phenomena of decay; it is that a Church is found to be in its essential nature not a creator of culture at all, but a society dependent for all the value that it has upon a real supernatural being. A monotheistic faith is not a cultural product, which entitles its holders to be ranked among creative civilizations; it is a recognition of truth, which puts its holders at once into relation with something they have not created.

Mr. Toynbee himself raises the question "whether Churches can really be comprehended in their entirety in the framework of the histories of the civilizations in which they make their historical appearances, or whether we have not to regard them as representatives of another species of society, which is at least distinct from the species 'civilizations' as these latter are distinct from primitive societies?" (p. 368; cf. particularly pp. 530-31 and ch. xxii), and defers its discussion to later volumes which are still to appear. It is premature, therefore, to canvass his final opinion on this topic. But I think it is clear that there has been a development in his views within the compass of the existing work, and that the earlier part would have been conceived differently if it had been written in the light of the later.

Mr. Toynbee seems to me to be at his subtlest and best in the long chapter XIX entitled "Schism in the Soul." He sketches there the alternative ways of behaviour, feeling and life which are developed in disintegrating societies as substitutes for the happy integration of soul which they enjoyed in the period of growth. The four alternative ways of life (pp. 505-30) are entitled Archaism, Futurism, Detachment, and Transfiguration. The first three are all attempts to escape from the present, Archaism into the past, Futurism (which includes all secular Utopianisms and is exemplified in the Jewish Zealots of New Testament times and in modern Marxism) into the future. They are both "attempts to break away from an irksome present by taking a flying leap out of it into another reach of the stream of time without abandoning the plane of mundane life on earth"; and they "resemble one another in being *tours de force* which prove, on trial, to have been forlorn hopes" (p. 515). The way of detachment is an attempt to escape from the mundane order altogether. It has been practised by the Stoic philosophers of the West and, more ruthlessly, by the ascetic disciples of Buddha in the East. This way also is pronounced to be a *cul-de-sac*; only the fourth way, that of transfiguration, leads right onward (p. 530). The way of transfiguration is a way of withdrawal indeed, but of withdrawal in order to return. It is the discovery of a kingdom, the Kingdom of God, which is "not . . . a dream of the future, but . . . a spiritual reality interpenetrating the present" (p. 529). Mr. Toynbee traces the development of this conception through the gradual recognition by the Jewish

## A STUDY OF HISTORY

people of the bankruptcy of Futurism, until it was finally realized in Christianity (p. 520-6).

Consideration of this passage seems to me to throw some doubt upon the method of investigation which the author began by adopting, and I should like to conclude by a few remarks on this point.

Mr. Toynbeeset out to write a natural history of civilizations and to employ the methods proper to natural history. These are to distinguish the various species of the creatures to be investigated, and by examination of instances to establish the specific characteristics and general laws of behaviour of each species. The subject-matter of Mr. Toynbee's study being human societies, he distinguishes the two species, primitive societies and civilizations, and sets out to establish generalizations about the latter by investigating the behaviour of its instances. (He finds reason in the course of his study to distinguish a third species of society, namely Churches.)

The question is whether the method of generalization is appropriate to this subject matter. The first thing which may lead us to doubt it is that the instances of the species to be studied are so limited in number that they can be counted. In the natural sciences, in which generalization is normally employed, we are accustomed to expect each species to have an indefinite number of instances. Primitive societies, of which there must have been thousands, are numerous enough to make us feel that the method can be naturally applied to them; but we feel a certain premonition of oddity when it is applied to a species of which we have counted all the instances to date, and have found them to total twenty-one.

This oddity shows itself in a more striking form when we come to the disintegration of civilizations. For example, we have related how Archaism, Futurism, Detachment, and Transfiguration are presented as four alternative forms of reaction against a socially disintegrating world. If we are to remain true to our method, we shall regard these as four species of escape, and shall expect to find each exemplified in a number of historical instances. We do in fact find several instances of each of the first three, but of the fourth, transfiguration, it appears that there is one instance only, namely Christianity. Thus Mr. Toynbee, in describing the saviours appropriate to each type of escape, presents his conclusions in the form of general laws "The saviour-archaist will try to reconstruct an imaginary past; the saviour-futurist will attempt to leap into an imagined future. The saviour who points the way to detachment will present himself as a philosopher taking cover behind the mask of a king; the saviour who points the way to transfiguration will appear as a god incarnate in a man." (p. 534). But in the profound short section in which this last alternative is treated (pp. 544-47), it appears that this law has received only one instantiation, namely in the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. Are we to regard this as a general principle which for accidental reasons has had no more than one instantiation?

Further, the four methods of escape should be co-ordinate species, but are found to be related to one another in a different way than this, the first three, namely, are related to the fourth as the less perfect to the more perfect. "Three of them are *culs-de-sac* and . . . only one, which we have called transfiguration, and illustrated by the light of Christianity, leads right onward" (p. 530). Mr. Toynbee's comparison of the different saviours, too, shows them as representing not merely different kinds of salvation, but different degrees of perfection. "This is in truth the final result of our survey of saviours. When we set out on this quest we found ourselves moving in the midst of a mighty host, but, as we have pressed forward, the marchers, company by company, have fallen out of the race. The first to fail were the swordsmen, the next the



## PHILOSOPHY

archaists and futurists, the next the philosophers, until only gods were left in the running. At the final ordeal of death, few, even of these would-be saviour gods, have dared to put their title to the test by plunging into the icy river. And now, as we stand and gaze with our eyes fixed upon the farther shore, a single figure rises from the flood and straightway fills the whole horizon. There is the Saviour; 'and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.' " (p. 547). The saviours are not related to one another as different co-ordinate species of a general type, but as many, in varying degrees imperfect, to one perfect. This must affect the proper method of our comprehension, which will be no longer to elicit a specific type from consideration of particular instances; but rather to understand the imperfect in the light of the perfect (and conversely to gain a better understanding of the perfect from seeing the less perfect approximations to it—a thing which Mr. Toynbee's book is admirably adapted to help us to do).

Thus Mr. Toynbee himself quite thoroughly abandons the generalizing method of natural history when he comes to this stage of his work. But I can imagine a disciple of his who would be willing to surrender this later post-scientific phase of his master, and to justify his earlier method of generalization as applied to civilizations. "The appropriateness of the method," he might argue "is sufficiently proved by its success. Mr. Toynbee has in fact revealed most striking identities of pattern repeated in diverse civilizations; indeed they are so constant that tables can be constructed which exhibit their common structure. This being so, it is merely a verbal dispute to argue whether these similar instances can constitute a 'species.' What is a species, except a group of similar instances?"

I should sympathize with a great deal of this. I don't know what historians say about it, but I am sure no layman can read this work without being impressed by the recurrence of pattern which it exhibits in different ages and civilizations, (e.g. the pattern of Withdrawal and Return, pp 217-40). But such recurrence of pattern may be indicative of other relationships than that of specific identity. Mr. Toynbee has given an example of this in his account of the saviours, who are related as forerunners to fulfilment. Mr. C. S. Lewis illustrates a similar relationship when he says "In the Christian story, God descends to re-ascend. . . . In this descent and re-ascent everyone will recognise a familiar pattern; a thing written all over the world. It is the pattern of all vegetable life . . . . It is the pattern of all animal generation too . . . . Death and Re-birth—go down to go up—it is a key principle . . . The doctrine of the Incarnation, if accepted, puts this principle even more emphatically at the centre. The pattern is there in nature because it was first there in God. All the instances which I have mentioned turn out to be but transpositions of the Divine theme into a minor key."

I suggest that this notion may be extended from nature to history, and that recurrence of a similar pattern both in nature and in history may be a mark of what Mr. Lewis calls elsewhere the divine idiom. Similarly the works of an artist, throughout the various phases of his development from immaturity to his prime, will exhibit a certain recognizable identity of style throughout all variations. In virtue of this identity, these works *can* always be classed together as similar instances, and the common elements of their structure could no doubt be elicited and tabulated. But such a method of understanding would be less adequate than one which, mindful of the temporal order in the artist's production, traced the development of his style through the successive phases of his artistic life.

Similarly, although it may be shown to be possible to generalize about such

\* "Miracles" Pp. 135-36.

## A STUDY OF HISTORY

historical phenomena as civilizations and Churches, it may still be true that this is a less than adequate method of understanding them. Suppose that the course of world-history is not, as the natural historian assumes, the unfolding of an indifferent, homogeneous, temporal back-cloth, against which specimens of civilizations are exhibited in an indefinite recurrence; suppose it is something more like a drama, which has had a beginning and a climax, and will have an end. In the latter case the various episodes will indeed exhibit a specific likeness to one another, since they will bear the marks of the same author's handiwork; but for their adequate comprehension something more will be needed, they will need to be understood in the light of the development of the plot.

The analogy of drama is in one respect a dangerous one. It suggests that the plot of history can be rendered lucid to the reason; that all that happens could ideally be seen to have its own necessity in the light of an intelligible theme; that the apparent contingency of historical fact is due only to the defect of our understanding. This view gives rise to those rationalizing "Philosophies of History," which are as suspect to professional historians as they are alien to Christian doctrine. But if we discount the analogy where it is false, if we insist that history is history and not drama, it may still be true that historical time falls into periods in a way analogous to that in which a drama falls into acts. It may still be true that the Incarnation forms such a turning-point that all that has happened after it belongs to a fundamentally different period from what happened before, (namely to the period between the Resurrection and the Second Coming).

Mr. Toynbee dismisses this as an absurdity in his early pages. "This dichotomy of historical time" (sc. into B.C. and A.D.) "is a relic of the outlook of the internal proletariat of the Hellenic Society, which expressed its sense of alienation from the Hellenic dominant minority by making an absolute antithesis between the old Hellenic dispensation and that of the Christian Church," and thereby succumbed to the egocentric illusion, (much more excusable in them with their limited knowledge, than in us), of treating the transition from one of our twenty-one societies to another as the turning-point of all human history" (p. 38).

I think it safe to say that what Mr. Toynbee rejects as absurd is not especially the notion that the Incarnation should be the turning-point of history, but the notion that history as a whole should have a turning-point at all. But why is it absurd? It seems to be so only if you start with the opposite assumption, that of the natural historian namely, which seems to imply the homogeneity of time and its indifference to the phenomena occurring in it. But I am out of my depth and am unable to state the problem clearly. I will end by uttering two suspicions which I cannot substantiate. The first is that Mr. Toynbee has imported from the sphere of science an assumption which has now been superseded within science itself. The method which he professes is not only that of a natural historian but of a pre-Darwinian natural historian. The second is that in the passage about the Saviours which I have quoted earlier, he has himself moved implicitly to a different point of view.

M. B. FOSTER.

\* It is not relevant to the argument, but surely this is an error of fact. According to Christian belief the coming of Christ marks the division between the dispensation of the New Testament and that of the Old Testament, not between the Christian and the Hellenic dispensations.

## PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

### PHILOSOPHY IN ITALY

THE crisis of the war, and of the values heightened by the war, is beginning to make itself felt in Italian philosophical thought. In a recent book by Antonio Aliotta<sup>1</sup> we see contrasted two modes of logic, and, depending on these, two ethics. The logic of abstract intellectualism, which is the logic of the natural sciences, is a construction that takes its rise from the instinct of conservation and the will to exercise power over things. From such a point of view individuality is of no importance: the things of nature are of equal value if they can satisfy certain of our needs in equal measure. This logic is doubtless legitimate if it is applied to things as interchangeable means, homogeneous in their instrumental utility. But the chain of means cannot be continued to infinity; a halt must be made at an end that has value in itself, and with regard to which alone there is sense in speaking of means. Just such an end is the personality, which is irreplaceable in value, and cannot and ought not to be treated as a thing.

Now, for the individual a different logic from that which derives from the will to conservation and to power is appropriate, and, according to Aliotta, it is the logic of sacrifice. This sacrifice is in the very essence of life, which goes ever beyond the individual towards a higher unity: it does not aim at its own conservation, but transcends it in the direction of the conquest of a higher form of life, which is realized through suffering and death. Sacrifice is not understood as an absolute annihilation of the individual in universal being; the logic of life is not indeed the logic of abstract identity. The higher forms are not realized by erasing the individuality of the lower organisms, but by making them participators in a higher life. That which dies is the egoistic being, the living for self of the individual, but the individual survives as an element in a vaster whole.

For the logic of quantity sacrifice is diminution of being; but in reality it is the conquest of a greater spiritual wealth, as is taught by Christianity, which, in the humbling of the individual in his surrender of himself, sees his elevation and enrichment. The will to power is betrayed in the spiritual poverty of an ego incapable of escaping from itself; it may deceive itself with the illusion of enlarging its dominion, but the value of the personality and of the end for which that power is directed remains qualitatively unchanged, however much the material domain may be increased. In sacrifice, on the other hand, the ego issues forth from its closed circle, its life-beat is multiplied in a thousand harmonious vibrations.

On sacrifice Aliotta seeks to base a complete ethic and a philosophy of religion. In order to support so vast a construction the idea of sacrifice naturally needs to be amplified, and the author in fact enlarges it to the extent of understanding creation itself as an act of sacrifice. God does not choose egoistically to enclose and exhaust in Himself all being and all power (in the quantitative sense) but limits His own being and His own power, in order to leave a possible domain for conquest by his creatures. Perfection does not exclude, rather it implies, the suffering of sacrifice, as the divine incarnation shows us.

<sup>1</sup> A. Aliotta, *Il sacrificio come significato del mondo*, Perrella, Rome, 1947, pp. 176.

## PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY: PHILOSOPHY IN ITALY

Aliotta develops very profound considerations about this central nucleus of his thesis; nevertheless they do not succeed in making the mind of the reader oblivious to the fact that the basis of the whole edifice is too narrow.

What influences has philosophy undergone through the profound revolution that has been accomplished in the last few decades, and which is still in progress, in the field of the natural sciences and particularly of pure physics? This problem, which absorbs equally scientists and philosophers, is the subject of a small but compact volume by Antonio Carrelli, professor of physics in the University of Naples.<sup>1</sup> At the heart of his essay are the problems of quantum physics, of which the current solutions revolutionize the old deterministic conception of the world to which the science, and with it the philosophy, of the nineteenth century had accommodated itself. The principle of indetermination is, in particular, that which to-day most demands the attention of philosophers in as much as it demolishes one of the barriers that the philosophic tradition had created between the subhuman and the human worlds. Another barrier is that which epistemology had raised between the subject and the object of consciousness; and even in this barrier a breach is made by the quantum theory of the present day which shows that, in the microscopic grade, the subject influences the object by the very fact of observing it. We are therefore in the presence of an interdependence and relativity very different from that of traditional epistemology, which assumed the subjective origin of sensible qualities. Here, on the other hand, it is a question of the modification of the objective structure of atomic complexes, by the active intervention of the subjective instruments of observation.

Other philosophical revisions are necessitated by the new physical doctrines of space and time, still others by the final antinomy in which science contends between the wave theories and the corpuscular theories, neither of which succeeds by itself in giving a complete interpretation of the universe, though in their very opposition they necessarily alternate.

But, in spite of these recognitions, the conclusion to which Carrelli's book finally comes is that the fundamental lay-out of the great philosophical problems is not radically altered by the new orientations of the physical sciences. The successes obtained, he says, ought not to lead to mistaken intellectual positions. More cannot be obtained from science than science is able to give, and if the results are extremely important from a practical point of view they do not provide a solution of the fundamental problem, which we must always rediscover within. There is no element in this development of thought to modify the classical scientific process; it is only a somewhat more complicated science, but the process remains the same.

The reason for the limits that Carrelli assigns to the philosophical validity of the new scientific concepts lies in the fact that he attributes to science a pragmatic character, that is purely "economic," that leaves unprejudiced the ultimate meaning of things. But it seems to me that this view is in conflict with the partial conclusions which I have already indicated, which show that the results of scientific investigation, especially those of quantum physics, have a profound bearing on the very nature of things. On this account there would seem to be more coherence in Eddington's conception, which distinguishes the purely structural interpretation, given for example by the doctrine of relativity, which does not go beyond the limits of an "economic" description of reality, from the quantum interpretation, in which can be seen an effort by science to penetrate into the inner nature of things.

<sup>1</sup> A. Carrelli, *Limiti e possibilità della scienza. Considerazioni filosofiche di un fisico*, Bari, Laterza, 1947, pp. 133.

## PHILOSOPHY

Finally, I bring to the notice of the English public a recent translation into Italian of the *Enneads of Plotinus* by V. Cilento.<sup>1</sup> Of the two volumes of which the complete work will consist, the first has been published, which comprises the first four *Enneads*, preceded by the life of Plotinus written by Porphyry. The work is important, not only for the accuracy of the translation, but also for the copious critical apparatus with which it is accompanied.

GUIDO DE RUGGIERO.

*(Translated from the Italian by Beatrice Allen.)*

<sup>1</sup> *Plotino, Enneadi, prima versione integra e commento critico*, by Vincenzo Cilento, Laterza Bari, 1947 pp. xvi, 461.

## NEW BOOKS

*Corrigendum.*—Readers are asked to note that in the review of Bertrand Russell's *A History of Western Philosophy, and Its Connection with Political and Social Circumstances from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, in the last issue of *PHILOSOPHY*, by Professor C. D. Broad, reference to the English edition of this book was inadvertently omitted. Messrs George Allen & Unwin have asked us to state that they are the publishers of this book throughout the world (ex. U.S.A.), that their edition was issued over twelve months ago, and that a reprint of over 30,000 copies has recently been distributed to booksellers.

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*Creative Man.* The Romanes Lecture 1947. By the RIGHT HON. VISCOUNT SAMUEL, G.C.B., G.B.E., D.C.L. (Oxford University Press, Pp. 30. Price 2s.)

This lecture, in consistency with the tradition of the Romanes Lectures, is addressed to a wide public. Touching on some of the main ills of the present time, it centres attention on the misuse of imagination. The writer shows, with a wealth of examples ranging from primitive animism to the superstitions and political mythologies of recent times, how prone we are to delude ourselves by hypostatizing abstractions. The most important examples are the teaching that the State is a "real entity" over and above the wills of its individual members, the personification of History and the submission of our lives to some "undefined supernatural force" or over-riding Destiny, and the notion of an Economic Man, the latter being put forward originally as fiction and coming "to be treated as actual." Some of these fictions have their uses, but many have nothing to compensate for the confusions they engender, and they lead to grave disaster. "In religion, in philosophy, in politics, there is nothing more dangerous than a 'fable that hardens into a dogma,' or an illusion masquerading as an ideal" (p. 17).

This warning is extremely timely. But one wishes that the author could have made some reference to theological dogmas, such as the doctrines of the Fall and of original sin, which afford peculiarly telling illustrations of the main theme of the Lecture. The omission is all the more remarkable because the ideas of "universal sin" and the guilt of "man" in which all participate independently of any individual action is the cause of grievous confusion, not only in religious thought, but also in ethics and politics. They are also among the outstanding causes of the despair which Lord Samuel singles out especially as the main obstacle to the bold undertakings for which our present situation calls.

More serious than this admission is the proneness of the author to carry his point too far. He very properly objects to the notion that there is some Goodness or "The Good" distinct from particular good actions or good experiences. But that is no warrant for concluding that "values are human inventions." For all that the author shows to the contrary, the goodness which qualifies particular acts and experiences may be quite objective. Likewise, in denouncing the view that Space is an "entity," Lord Samuel is apt to suggest, although I am not sure that this is his real intention, that Space and Time are "purely mental concepts" and "not real elements in the universe."

## PHILOSOPHY

On its more constructive side, the Lecture offers, in very brief outline, a theory of value based on "the elementary proposition that men in general desire their own welfare" (p. 23). Welfare "is built up from many interconnected elements," and experience teaches us what they are. "Experience shows that health is better than disease, comfort than penury, knowledge than ignorance," etc. But it is highly questionable whether experience can do this apart from independent judgments of value; nor is it easy to believe that a sufficient reason why men "should do right when to do wrong is pleasanter" may be found in sanctions imposed by society and "the pressure of public opinion." One doubts also whether such a view affords adequate protection to the individual. Does not Lord Samuel tend to revert surreptitiously to the oppressive theories which he himself deplors, when he concludes that "the creativity of man culminates in the Moral Law" (p. 25)?

But in raising these objections we must not be thought to stint our praise for the achievements of this important Lecture in respect of the more critical matters which are its main concern.

H. D. LEWIS.

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*The Basis of Criticism in the Arts.* By STEPHEN C. PEPPER. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. 1945. Pp. 177. Price \$2.50).

Professor Pepper's book (composed of lectures given at Harvard, with an Introduction and a Supplementary Essay) is twice welcome. It offers to the art-critic a "reason of the hope that is in him"—a too-often blind hope that his criticism is something more than a subjective impression. And it helps the British philosopher—if the British philosopher will inform himself of this important subject—to see how a comparative study of critical aesthetic judgments can reveal the general metaphysical assumptions on which they are based, and can also reveal, perhaps, their need of fresh criticism, revision or reconstruction. This last, however, will have to be worked out by philosophers themselves (if so minded) for it is the application of philosophy to criticism which is the author's main aim.

This does not mean "the objectionable 'aesthetics from above' decried by Fechner." Of two evils, sheer impressionistic criticism is far less objectionable (it is at least facing empirical facts) than regulation-by-order emanating from metaphysical bureaucrats. But that impressionistic criticism can stand by itself is as much self-delusion as is the repudiation of all metaphysics by positivists. One must pre-suppose, and what one selectively perceives is determined partly by one's pre-suppositions. It is better to acknowledge pre-suppositions, to face them, to think them out and relate them to the empirical field, than to deny and repress them (which can cause, one observes, a whole ferment of chilly emotions). This thinking is metaphysics, and Professor Pepper, staunch empiricist though he is, is not afraid of them. The Professor is an empiricist; the definition of what is and what is not aesthetically valuable, is to be discovered only through constant consultation with competent and expert judgment, and if a definition does not fit this it must be modified or abandoned. Yet, the empirical aesthetic material once so defined (the author gives an interesting account (pp. 27-35) of the bearings of different types of definition), one's attitude to it will inevitably be affected by what Professor Pepper calls a "world hypothesis."

The Introduction refers to the four most considerable "world hypotheses" described in Professor Pepper's earlier book of that name. They are labelled *Formism*, *Mechanism*, *Contextualism*, *Organicism*. The first is derived from Plato and Aristotle: in aesthetics it stresses *normality*. Mechanism, of which Santayana is the best-known representative, puts first *pleasure* enjoyed within

the organism. *Contextualism*, the youngest of the hypotheses, as expounded by James, Pierce, Schiller, Bergson, Mead, Dewey, which is "operationalism in science, instrumentalism in logic . . . objective relativism in ethics and social theory," means in aesthetics that the more vivid and extensive and rich the intuition of *quality*, the greater its aesthetic value is. *Organicism* is objective idealism and its application to aesthetics was made in what Professor Pepper regards (most justly in my opinion) as a masterpiece—Bosanquet's *Three Lectures on Aesthetic*.

We are faced with an obvious difficulty at the outset. The four world hypotheses are *different*, and in important respects contradictory, hypotheses: how then can we get a single standard of criticism? Why not four? The answer is possibly severalfold. We can't help it, it might be much worse; the four world hypotheses are attempts to think connectedly about *all* the empirical evidence—so that in spite of fundamental metaphysical disagreements, there is a wider and better basis for criticism here than in mere *ad hoc* judgments. Again, the hypotheses are *hypotheses*, and challenging differences in their aesthetic implications might lead to their restatement and perhaps synthesis. Again, since the hypotheses are not final, it is quite legitimate to take what we can get of the several criticisms based upon them, emphasising different aspects, and to put them together. This is very effectively done in the final lecture, from which any critic, especially a literary critic, may learn much. Professor Pepper here applies each of the four methods in turn to two poems—one the sonnet of Shakespeare beginning:—

"When to the sessions of sweet silent thought"

the other a sonnet of Hopkins:—

"I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day."

The mechanist's evaluation will be in terms of the pleasures of the senses (sound, rhythm, etc.), of association, of design, of pattern, of recognition of the familiar types. To these the *contextualist* will add the vividness of quality which makes them important in the poem. The hedonistic mechanist, for example, may shrink, wrongly, and because it contains unpleasant bitterness, from the *quality* of irretrievable loss in the line:—

"For precious friends hid in death's dateless night."

Or Hopkins' poem may be judged bad by the mechanist because it contains much that is obscure, repelling and unpleasant. By the contextualist's standards these attributes are a positive help in the expression of the quality of torture of a religious soul at the midnight hour. The *organicism*, on the other hand, has much to say upon ideas (e.g. money and debts in the Shakespearean, judgment and witness in the Hopkins poem) vowel-sequences, etc., which *integrate* the poem. Finally, the *formist* asks, How well does it represent its culture? Does it fulfil its *genre*? How satisfying is it to the fully developed, highly discriminating man? His judgment on the two poems is that Shakespeare succeeds in these things whilst Hopkins fails.

The final criticism must be an inclusive one. On all four views Shakespeare's poem is superlatively good. Only on the contextualist view is Hopkins' so. Now though we cannot reduce criticism to numerical units or assess it by votes, the practical critic who is well-informed enough to include all these criteria, will hold them together and direct them discriminatingly upon the work. Add to this the facts—made clear in a really admirable Supplementary Essay on the "aesthetic work of art"—that there is a physical continuant in all arts except perhaps the dance, that men have similar biological constitutions, that works



## PHILOSOPHY

of art are made and enjoyed within a common culture, that aesthetic judgment is "founded" or built up from a consecutive series of perceptions, that there is a "convergence" effect among the perceptions of many different subjects, and we may conclude that the aesthetic work of art or the work as maturely perceived, is not a mere private affair and that very considerable objectivity of judgment may be achieved.

We must, however, keep clear a distinction between the judgment of aesthetic perception (a judgment of fact as to what the perceptual content actually is), and the judgment of aesthetic value. About the first there may be very wide, discriminating, agreement. Yet, assuming such agreement on the matter of fact, there is likely to be divergence about value. It is upon the values rather than the facts that "world hypotheses" have bearing,—though opinion about values may also affect perceptual judgments of fact (the organicist will, e.g., criticise the hedonistic mechanist for failing to perceive that dissonances "are actually transformed by integration into the meaning of the whole") An objective idealist is bound to have a different idea of "importance" from a mechanist's.

Even so, there is an enormous stride forward from the welter of subjectivist art-criticisms. Philosophers may disagree, but we can see pretty clearly where the broad differences lie, and in relating critical divergence to these underlying philosophies, Professor Pepper deserves our warm gratitude.

The chief trouble lies in the pluralism. Here are four bases, not one basis. Yet even here, if the (aesthetically) critical implications of a metaphysic can be shown to be compatible, or not compatible, with experienced aesthetic judgment, it is thereby so far verified, or shown, perhaps, to need modification. The forging of this link between metaphysics and criticism can help to strengthen both

LOUIS ARNAUD REID.

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*Puritanism and Democracy* By RALPH BARTON PERRY (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1944 Pp xviii + 688 Price \$5.00)

The theme of this book is the religious and intellectual foundation of the civilization of the United States of America. It is, and is intended to be, a book for the times. It was written during the war; its background is the scepticism which since the beginning of this century has been corroding American ideals; and, in effect, it is a reasoned reassertion of the creed of America. But its genuine learning and the quality of its reflectiveness make it something more than a mere *livre de circonstance*. Indeed, there can have been few occasions when a philosopher of high repute has more profitably turned his mind to the needs of his generation and has produced a book so illuminating and so much to the point.

Puritanism and Democracy are, for Professor Perry, the two systems of ideas which united to determine, not the whole, but a large part of "the distinctively American tradition, culture, institutions, and nationality." The first is "the creed of certain Englishmen in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries," the second is "the creed of certain colonial Americans who waged a war of liberation, and created a new political constitution, at the close of the eighteenth century." Both have their roots in European culture.

The plan of the book is straightforward. The first of the three parts into which it is divided is mainly historical. Puritanism and Democracy as historic systems of ideas are examined and their contribution towards the "making of the American mind" traced in detail. The Puritanism with which Professor Perry is concerned is not merely the doctrines which are peculiar to the Puritans, it is the whole complex system of ideas which had its roots in

## NEW BOOKS

mediaeval Christianity. And the Democracy with which he is concerned is "the political and social creed which was the professed ground of the American Revolution of the eighteenth century," a creed which derived from the philosophy of the Enlightenment. But the first part is only an introduction to the real theme of the book, which is a long and elaborate analysis and appraisal of both Puritanism and Democracy in the American tradition. The spirit in which this is undertaken is indicated in the following passage:

"Puritanism and Democracy, under these or other names, form a substantial part of the heritage of Americans. The chief source of spiritual nourishment for any nation must be its own past, perpetually rediscovered and renewed. A nation which negates its tradition loses its historical identity and wantonly destroys its chief source of spiritual vitality; a nation which merely reaffirms its tradition grows stagnant and corrupt. But it is not necessary to choose between revolution and reaction. There is a third way—the way, namely, of discriminating and forward-looking fidelity."

Here Professor Perry appears not merely as the historian of a tradition, but as a critic with a keen eye for its shortcomings. Yet, as he expounds it, the tradition itself is seen to have a certain power of self-criticism; while Puritanism and Democracy often re-enforce one another's errors, they also correct and complement one another's limitations.

There is in these pages, which compose the bulk of the book, much to admire and little to regret. Their outstanding merit is that, whatever one may think of the conclusions, one becomes certain as one reads that Professor Perry will waste no time before getting to the essential topics to be considered and will argue his point of view with lucidity and enthusiasm.

One matter of some importance may perhaps be remarked upon. In his analysis of what may be called the philosophy of American democracy (the central argument of which is contained in a chapter called "The Supremacy of Reason and Conscience") the whole emphasis is placed upon its generation from the optimism of the philosophy of the Enlightenment—the confidence that from tolerant discussion "the truth would emerge and prevail on its own merits," the confidence in human reason. Historically, no doubt, there is considerable evidence for this view of the generation of democratic theory. Nevertheless I think it is a mistake to identify democratic theory with optimism of this sort, and even historically it is a view that needs to be corrected by a recognition that much that is characteristic of democracy is a reflection of scepticism (doubt not only concerning the power of human intelligence to arrange a satisfactory state of society, but also concerning the whole idea of a permanently good society) rather than of intellectual optimism.

MICHAEL OAKESHOTT.

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*Works of Love.* By S. KIERKEGAARD. Translated from the Danish by David and Lilian Swenson. (Oxford University Press. Pp. xiv + 317. Price 18s. net.)

It is generally held that there can be a duty to do an act, but not to do it from a certain motive. Then how can love, if it be a way of feeling, be also a duty? Does "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" make sense as a categorical imperative? Perhaps no one has quite answered this; but in the "Reflections" collected together in this book, Kierkegaard adds his testimony to that of others within the Christian tradition who have described a kind of love which is not primarily a way of feeling and quite different from romantic

## PHILOSOPHY

passion, but which has its roots in *conscience*, religiously interpreted. But to love one's neighbour "as a matter of conscience" does not mean just coldly to do him good out of a sense of duty. It means seeing him as a person, to be respected in his mysterious separateness from ourselves, and yet as our equal "before God." We may go on and ask whether, if we respect another in this way (seeing him, in Kantian terms, as "an end in himself") it necessarily follows that we are moved by outgoing good will and affection towards him. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." As a fact of experience, with some people at any rate, it seems to happen so, and this is impressive. But it does not seem to be entailed, and Kierkegaard does not discuss this. He does however bring out that love needs to be grounded in the kind of objectivity and respect for another person which is expressed in the idea of duty. "Only when love is a duty, only then is love eternally secure," whereas romantic and passionate love is notoriously insecure, and can even pass ambivalently into hatred. "And because man, even in relation to the beloved woman, is primarily her neighbour, and she is primarily his neighbour, therefore both he and she must be asked severally" (i.e. in the marriage service) "whether they have consulted with their conscience. . . . Primarily your wife must be your neighbour; the fact that she is your wife is then a closer definition of your special relation to each other. But that which is at the foundation of the eternal must also lie at the bottom of every expression of the special."

Kierkegaard's voluminous writings are the outpourings of a lonely genius, who seems to have felt the need to try to say what he had to say over and over again in different ways. But those who are not deterred by his repetitiveness and occasional perversity will find some penetrating remarks in this book concerning that familiar, but after all rather strange saying "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

DOROTHY M. ENNET.

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*Wisdom and Responsibility* By WALTER FALES. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press 1946. Pp vii + 166 English price 14s. net.

A good deal of profound and original thought is packed into this slender volume. Mr. Fales writes in a pleasant, scholarly style and his work is obviously the product of a mature and capable mind. His main contention is that all thought and action is governed, consciously or unconsciously, by what he calls "final ends." These are felt as "responsibility," a term which appears to include such various compulsions as the urge to self-preservation and the obligatory force of duty. Mr. Fales seems to avoid positing any strictly non-biological ends, whether as "emergents" or as the result of another order of being manifesting itself in human behaviour—what might be expressed (to use Platonic modes of thought) as the functioning of that part of the human personality which belongs to the world of reality. Mr. Fales devotes a good deal of space to "values" and the function of evaluating in the processes of human behaviour but it is not easy to discover his idea of the nature and origin of values nor of their relation to the final ends. Thus, the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty can hardly be called a biological end, but I think Mr. Fales would include these values among his final ends, as motivations of human action and thought.

The chapter dealing with the process of learning is one of the best in the book. The author shows how any increase in knowledge pushes the frontiers of the mind further into unknown country, thus bringing with increase of knowledge a corresponding increase of ignorance. He recognises the function of "intuitive thinking" in learning, that flash of inspiration where analytical

thought gives place to a synthetic act of the mind in which data are seen as a "whole" and the intellect takes hold of a new concept. There is much in the book reminiscent of Gestalt psychology.

Mr. Fales is least successful when he grapples with the idea of God. He never seems to visualize a Reality to which the modes of being we are accustomed to are merely analogical. He rightly points out the contradictions to which Anselm's ontological argument gives rise if the perfections therein posited of God are taken as merely human attributes. But did Anselm intend them to be taken in this way?

Mr. Fales comes very close to subjective idealism. Towards the end of the book we are startled by echoes from Fichte and Schelling and even Plotinus. "Man takes his world, not for a *fait accompli*, but for a task." In a way, the world is our own arrangement. "What (man) actually does is to *copy*" (the italics are mine) "the organization which manifests itself in his ultimate duties and beliefs. . . . He is able to create because he is a creature. . . . He creates the idea of a world which is the virtual scene for the accomplishments of his final ends."

I. M. HUBBARD.

*Essays in Science and Philosophy.* By ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1947. Pp 348. Price \$4.75).

This book consists of a selection of lectures, addresses, and essays given and written at different periods in the long career of a distinguished mathematician and philosopher. Some of the lectures and papers have previously appeared in either English or American journals, and the two well-known lectures "Immortality" and "Mathematics and the Good," contained in *The Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead*, "Library of Living Philosophers" (published by Northwestern University Press, 1941) have been reprinted. The book is divided into four sections, Part I is entitled "Personal," Part II "Philosophy," Part III, "Education," Part IV "Science."

The book opens with his charming "Autobiographical Notes," followed by a delicious chapter on "Memories," disclosing the naive impressions made upon a small boy's mind by the events and persons in his environment, with delightful sketches of the characters of some of the folk in his father's parish sixty years ago, and of visitors to the vicarage.

Part II, the section dealing with Philosophy, contains, among other chapters, a lecture entitled "Immortality," originally delivered in April 1941 as the Ingersoll Lecture at the Harvard Divinity School, an essay on "Mathematics and the Good" and another on "The Analysis of Meaning."

The discussion of the subject of "immortality" is based upon the presupposition that all entities or factors in the universe are essentially relevant to each other's existence. The view put forward is that there is an eternal aspect of the universe which is related to the temporal aspect, and that the temporal aspect impresses itself upon the eternal.

The two sides of the universe, Whitehead calls "The Two Worlds." Each world considered by itself is an abstraction, since the concrete universe requires both worlds. Consequently an adequate description of one World includes characterizations derived from the other. The two worlds are called respectively "The World of Activity" and "The World of Value."

The World which emphasizes the multiplicity of mortal things is "The World of Activity." This is the World of origination, of creation. The "World of Activity" needs the other World to give it meaning. This other World is

\* See the review of *The Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead*, *PHILOSOPHY*, Vol. XVII, No. 67.

## · PHILOSOPHY ·

the "World of Value." This World emphasizes Persistence. Value is in its nature timeless and immortal, and a finite, mortal thing is only valuable because it participates in the immortality of some value whose essence is eternal.

When we turn our attention to the "World of Value" we find that this World, in its turn, needs the other world of Origination and Creation, and for this reason. The notion of "effectiveness" cannot be divorced from the concept of value, and value only has effectiveness in its commerce with the active side of the universe. Cut off from its relation to the "World of Activity," the "World of Value" is a realm of abstract entities performing no function. It is saved from this futility of abstraction by its impact upon the process of Creation. The World of Activity aims at value, and the World of Value satisfies its aspirations.

The question now raised is whether temporal fact, by realizing value which in its essence is timeless, acquires thereby the "immortality" of value? The topic of the immortality of man is a side issue of the wider topic of the immortality of realized value. Whitehead's view is that the understanding of the universe requires that the World of Activity and the World of Value should each exhibit the impress of the other. This leads him to say that the realization of value in the World of Change should find a counterpart in the World of Value. Such a view means nothing less than that temporal personality in the World of Activity involves immortal personality in the World of Value.

It is natural for us to ask what is the evidence for such a belief. Whitehead is unable to enlighten us very much in this matter. The only answer he can give is "the reaction of our own nature to the general aspect of life in the Universe." He is dissatisfied with traditional philosophic thought which presupposes independent existences, and the possibility of an adequate description of a finite fact. He considers that this claim of "exactness" is a fake. I think we are meant to draw the inference that a finite being needs for its adequate understanding the World of Value as well as the World of Activity, and that in some way or other not clear to us, it shares the immortality of the former.

The next topic discussed is the connection between modern mathematics and the notion of the Good. Can mathematics elucidate this notion? In the first place Whitehead asserts that no finite entity enjoys self-sufficiency: it cannot be divorced from its relation to the unbounded universe, and its very meaning is derived from its relevance to this infinite background. In the second place, it is pointed out that "Pattern" is a partial disclosure of reality with an essential reference to this infinite background. In the third place, it is maintained that all value is the gift of finitude (since the infinite has no properties) and that value is the necessary condition of activity. Seeing that activity means the origination of patterns of assemblage, and that mathematics is the study of pattern, it will be seen why mathematics is claimed to be related to the study of the good and the study of the bad.

It is generally admitted that "pattern" is important for civilization. For example, every art is founded on the study of pattern. But social systems involve the maintenance of patterns of behaviour, and advances in civilization depend upon the fortunate modification of such behaviour patterns. Thus, says Whitehead, "the infusion of pattern into natural occurrences, and the stability of such patterns, and the modification of such patterns, is the necessary realization of The Good" (p. 109). But it is emphasized that the notion of pattern is meaningless except as a reference to the background of feeling, within which the pattern arises. A pattern can only exist in virtue of its doom of realization, and this "doom" "consigns the pattern to play its part in an

uprush of feeling which is the awakening of infinitude to finite activity" (p. 111). Such, we are told, is the nature of existence: it is the acquisition of pattern by feeling.

The relevance of mathematics in respect of the notion of The Good comes then to this. In the experience of Good or Evil, pattern plays a part in the unit of feeling which includes the enjoyment of the pattern. Mathematics is the study of the pattern in abstraction from the particulars which are patterned.

In the chapter on *Process and Reality* (pp. 114-19), the author reveals the secret that led him to write the book. It was that Philosophers had taken too easily the notion of "perishing." Being and Becoming had received voluminous attention, but "pershing" had been covered up as a sort of scandal. He remarks that almost the whole of *Process and Reality* can be read as an attempt to analyse perishing. "The notion of prehension of the past means that the past is an element that perishes, and thereby remains an element in the state beyond, and thus is objectified" (p. 117). If we get an adequate notion of what is meant by perishing, we have accomplished an apprehension of the meaning of memory and causation. And the meaning is this—because things perish, they are immortal.

Whitehead here reiterates his views on permanence and transience. He thinks that the universe has a side which is mental and permanent. This side is what elsewhere he has called "the primordial nature of God." It is a non-temporal but actual *nous*. This permanent actuality passes into and is immanent in the transient side. The permanent side is the appetitive vision of all possibilities of order, "possibilities at once incompatible and unlimited with a fecundity beyond imagination" (p. 118). Finite transience stages this welter of possibilities, according to their relevance, in a flux of epochs. Our epoch illustrates one special type of order, which will pass into another type of which we have not the faintest notion. Then our present theories of order, if remembered, will be regarded as trivialities, "gradually fading into nothingness" (p. 119).

There is an interesting discussion on the *Analysis of Meaning* (122). John Dewey had asked Whitehead to decide between the "genetic-functional" interpretation of first principles and the "mathematical formal" interpretation. Whitehead declines to make this decision, because the present problem is the fusion of two interpretations. The historic process of the world requires the genetic functional interpretation, which in its turn requires for its understanding an insight into those ultimate principles of existence which express the necessary connections within the flux (p. 123).

In this discussion Whitehead is concerned to emphasize the fusion of necessity and accident in our observation of Nature. Owing to the vagueness of our insight, our metaphysical notions are only an approximation. They represent such disengagement of necessity from accident as we are able to attain. Our knowledge is always haunted by alternatives. But necessity permits no alternative.

The source of our vagueness is deficiency of language. We can discern the variations of meaning of a word, although we cannot verbalize them in a decisive manner, and are thus misled in our thought by the deceptive identity of the repeated word. The method of algebra embodies the greatest discovery for the partial remedy of defective language. But even this method leaves us with the infusion of necessity with accident, since the principles of algebraic symbolism express the concurrence of mathematical formal principles with accidental factors.

Whitehead informs us that, in the algebraic method, the basic connectives

## PHILOSOPHY

are the relevant mathematical formal principles. The real variables are the unspecified accidental factors. But, it is to be noted, the connection of the accidents is not a mere mathematical-formal principle. It is the concrete accidental fact of those accidents as thus connected. Hence we have a suffusion of the connectives by the things connected. This suffusion is the most general expression of the genetic-functional character of the universe. It is this suffusion of mathematical-formal principles with accidental factors which is responsible for the vagueness of our metaphysical insight. "To hold necessity apart from accident, and to hold form apart from process, is an ideal of the understanding. The approximation to this ideal is the romantic history of the development of human intelligence" (p. 131).

The chapter on "Uniformity and Contingency" first appeared in the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. 23, 1922-23. It deals with the general problem as to whether, on the ground of experience, it is possible to deduce any systematic uniformity in nature in respect of types of entities or throughout the relations between them.

The argument proceeds as follows. We are aware of a dominant space-time continuum, and reality consists of the sense-objects, such as colours, shades, sounds, smells, touches, bodily-feelings "projected" into that continuum. But "projection" implies a sensorium which is the origin of projection. This sensorium is within our bodies, and each sense-object can be described as located in any region of space-time—say in any "event," by reference to a simultaneous location of a bodily sensorium. The process of projection consists in our awareness of an irreducible many-termed relation between the sense-object in question, the bodily sensorium, and the space-time continuum. We are also aware of the continuum as stratified in layers of simultaneity whose temporal thickness depends on the specious present. This awareness of the "ingression" of sense-objects amidst the events of a dominant space-time continuum, constitutes our apprehension of nature. Because any *part* of the scheme of relations determines the scheme as a *whole*, the scheme must have a systematic uniformity.

Whitehead next deals with Hume's contention that we have no arguments to convince us that objects, which have in our experience frequently been conjoined, will likewise in other instances be conjoined in the same manner; and that our inference that such objects will be conjoined, rests upon nothing but custom. He says that clearly "the key to the mystery is not to be found in the accumulation of instances, but in the intrinsic character of each instance." This overlooked character of the single instance must be its significance of something other than itself. Now every sentient being passes from awareness of sense-objects to the *perceptual* object indicated by that instance. How do we pass from the ingression of sense-objects to perceptual objects? Whitehead's answer is that the ingression of sense-object *signifies* the perceptual object, and a perceptual object is a true Aristotelian adjective of some event which is its situation. The relation of the sense-object to its situation is entirely different from that of a perceptual object. The sense object is derived from its ingression into nature, which is an irreducible many-termed relation. But a perceptual object is not describable as a many-termed relation. Perceptual objects such as houses, trees, stones, etc., are really the "controls" of ingression. As Aristotelian adjectives, they are free from the reign of relativity, since they are just adjectives of the events which they qualify and no others. Thus perceptual objects are sharply distinguished from sense-objects, whose ingression involves all sorts of events, in all sorts of ways.

But if the very nature of perceptual objects is to be "controls," have we not in them the missing character whose supposed absence led Hume to remove

## NEW BOOKS

causation from nature into mind? In modern scientific language, a perceptual object means a present focus and a field of force streaming out into the future. The present focus is the perceptual object in its relation to the future.

This discussion on "sense objects" and "perceptual objects" leads on naturally to the problem of induction. Since there are a finite number of perceptual objects within a region of space-time, and this finiteness still remains as we pass from our vague experience of perceptual objects to the more precise scientific objects, such as electrons and protons, valid induction is possible. As Mr. J. M. Keynes says in Chapter XXII of his *Treatise on Probability*: "if the premises of an argument permit us to assume that the facts or propositions, with which an argument is concerned, belong to a finite system, then probable knowledge can be validly obtained by means of an inductive argument."

Part III consists of various lectures and addresses on Education. One on "The Study of the Past—its Uses and its Dangers" was printed in the *Harvard Business Review* for July 1933. Another, "Education and Self-Education," was delivered on Founders Day, February 1st, 1919, to the Stanley Technical School and Coventry & Son, Ltd. An address entitled "Mathematics and Liberal Education" was printed in the *Journal of the Association of Teachers of Mathematics for the South-Eastern Part of England*, Vol. I, No. 1 (1912). Finally, a lecture on "Historical Changes," given to the Radcliffe College Alumnae Association, appeared in *Radcliffe Quarterly*, January 1930. All these addresses disclose the author's penetrating grasp of principles and his wide knowledge of the great movements in world history.

The final section of the book, Part IV, dealing with Science, is for the most part technical. There is a chapter on "The First Physical Synthesis," dealing with that great epoch in the development of science of about one hundred years, whose centre was 1642, the year in which occurred the death of Galileo and the birth of Newton. This is followed by chapters on "Axioms of Geometry," "Mathematics," "Non-Euclidean Geometry," reprinted from the 11th issue of *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Then there is a paper on "Indication, Classes, Number, Validation," which appeared in *Mind*, 1934. The final chapter of this section is on "Einstein's Theory," which appeared in *The Times Education Supplement*, February 12th, 1920. The purpose of the original article was to suggest an alternative explanation of Einstein's great achievement.

The book is attractively produced and there is an adequate index.

SYDNEY E. HOOPER.

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### Books also received:

- L. CRANMER-BYNG, F.R.S.A. *The Vision of Asia* (An Interpretation of Chinese Art and Culture). With a Foreword by the Rt. Hon. R. A. Butler, M.P. London: John Murray. Pocket Edition, 1947. Pp. xiv + 306. 6s. net.
- A. H. ARMSTRONG. *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*. London: Methuen & Co. 1947. Pp. xvi + 241. 15s. net.
- FUNG YU-LAN, Ph.D. *The Spirit of Chinese Philosophy*. Translated and Edited with an Introduction by E. R. Hughes, M.A., Reader in Chinese Philosophy, Oxford University. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd. 1947. Pp. xiv + 224. 15s. net.
- SIDNEY SPENCER, B.A. *Shall We Follow Karl Barth?* London: The Lindsey Press. 1947. Pp. 59. 1s. 6d. net.



## PHILOSOPHY

- E. G. RUPP. *Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition*. Cambridge University Press. 1947. Pp. 220. 8s. 6d. net.
- GEORGE SEAVER. *Albert Schuetz The Man and His Mind*. London: Messrs. A. & C. Black, Ltd. 1947. Pp. viii + 346. 18s. net.
- KURT LACHMANN. *The Renaissance of the Individual*. London: Charles Skilton, Ltd. 1947. Pp. xvi + 143. 7s. 6d. net.
- DAGOBERT D. RUNES (Ed.). *The Selected Writings of Benjamin Rush*. New York: Philosophical Library, Inc. 1947. Pp. xii + 433. 5 dollars.
- MAURICE J. SHORE. *Soviet Education in Psychology and Philosophy*. New York: Philosophical Library, Inc. 1947. Pp. xxii + 346. 4 dollars 75 cents.
- HERBERT DINGLE. *The Missing Factor in Science*. (Inaugural Lecture as Professor of History and Philosophy of Science, University College, London.) London: H. K. Lewis & Co., Ltd. 1947. Pp. 18. 2s.
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## INSTITUTE NOTES

A Meeting to celebrate the gracious according of the title "Royal" to the Institute by H.M. The King, was held at the Royal Society, Burlington House, London, W.1, on Thursday, November 27, 1947, at 5.15 p.m. Addresses were given to a crowded audience by Field-Marshal Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa, Viscount Samuel, President of the Institute, Lord Lindsay of Birker, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, and Vice-Chairman of the Institute, Professor C. D. Broad, Knightsbridge Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Cambridge, and Professor E. A. Milne, Rouse Ball Professor of Mathematics in the University of Oxford. Messages of goodwill were read from H.M. The King, Signor Benedetto Croce, the distinguished Italian thinker, M. Jacques Maritain, French Ambassador to the Vatican, and Professor Niels Bohr, President of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters.

It is proposed to arrange the letters and addresses in the form of a Brochure, and members will receive a copy in due course.

Members are reminded that the following lectures will be given in the Lent Term at University Hall, 14, Gordon Square, W.C.1, at 5.15 p.m.:

- Monday, January 26th. "Existentialism." Professor H. J. Paton (University of Oxford).
- Friday, February 27th. "The Organic State." G. R. G. Mure, M.A. (Warden of Merton College, Oxford).
- Friday, March 12th. "Truth." Professor A. J. Ayer (University of London).
- Friday, April 16th. "Philosophy and Personal Commitment." Professor J. W. Harvey (University of Leeds)

There will also be two Evening Meetings at the Eugenics Theatre, University College, Gower Street, W.C.1, at 7.30 p.m.:

- (1) Friday, February 13th. "The Philosophic Basis of Modern Physics." Dr Robert Eisler
- (2) Wednesday, March 3rd. "Philosophy and Religion." John Hartland-Swann, Ph D.

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### SPECIAL NOTICE REGARDING A NEW CLASS OF MEMBERS OF THE INSTITUTE, CALLED "ASSOCIATES"

In order that the Institute's Journal, *PHILOSOPHY*, shall be easily available, at a nominal cost, to students at the various Universities, the Council has decided that there shall be a new Class of Associate Members. Students at any institution or organisation for higher education are eligible for admission to the rank of Associates for a period not exceeding three years, at a cost of 8s. 6d. per annum. Associate membership carries with it all the privileges of membership except that of taking part in the government of the Institute.

# Trinity College

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## PERROTT STUDENTSHIP

in

## PSYCRICAL RESEARCH

The Electors to the Perrott Studentship are prepared to receive applications from candidates.

Psychical Research is defined, for the purpose of the Studentship, as "the investigation of mental or physical phenomena which seem *prima facie* to suggest (a) the existence of supernormal powers of cognition or action in human beings in their present life, or (b) the persistence of the human mind after bodily death."

The Studentship is open to any person who shall have completed his or her twenty-first year at the time when the election takes place. A Student may be re-elected once, but not more than once.

The Studentship is tenable for one year, and the Student will be required to devote a substantial part of the period of his tenure to investigating some problem in Psychical Research. The Student shall not, during the tenure of his studentship, engage in any other occupation to such an extent as would in the opinion of the Electors interfere with his course of research.

The Studentship will be of such value, not exceeding £300, as the Electors may award after considering the nature of the research which the candidate proposes to undertake. The emolument will, in general, be paid half-yearly, and the first instalment will be paid on the quarter-day on which the tenure of the Studentship begins.

The Student shall, during the tenure of his Studentship, pursue to the satisfaction of the Electors the course of research proposed by him in his application; provided that such course may be altered with the consent of the Electors. The Electors will appoint a Supervisor with whom the Student is to keep in regular touch. If the Electors shall report to the Council of Trinity College, Cambridge, that the Student is failing to pursue his course of research with due diligence, the Council may, if they think fit, deprive him of his Studentship.

Applications from candidates should be sent to Professor C. D. BROAD, Trinity College, Cambridge, before May 3, 1948. In making his application a candidate should state his qualifications and claims, and his proposed course of research; he may also submit any work which he has written, published or unpublished. No testimonials are required from candidates who are graduates of Cambridge University or women students on whom a title of a degree has been conferred by that University. Other candidates must submit the names of three referees, and the Electors will not award the Studentship to any such candidate until they have had a personal interview with him.

The election to the Studentship will take place in the Easter Term of 1948, and, if a candidate be elected, his tenure will begin at Michaelmas following the election.

October 31, 1947.

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. DUTY. PROFESSOR A. MACBEATH . . . . .	99
II. BUDDHA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE IN INDIAN CULTURE. PROFESSOR A. R. WADIA . . . . .	116
III. WHITEHEAD'S PHILOSOPHY; THE WORLD AS <i>PROCESS</i> . SYDNEY E. HOOPER, M.A., . . . . .	149
IV. NEW BOOKS—REVIEWS . . . . .	161
V. INSTITUTE NOTES (XTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHILOSOPHY) . . . . .	191

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## THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY APPEAL FOR NEW MEMBERS AND DONATIONS

THE Council appeals to members to do all in their power to introduce new members in order to extend the benefits of the Institute and to increase its revenue.

The Institute has no endowments, and its work, which includes lecture courses and meetings for discussion in the various Centres, as well as the conduct of the Journal, cannot be carried on from revenue derived solely from annual subscriptions. The Council, therefore, appeals for donations, small or large, from sympathizers with the Institute's aims.

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# PHILOSOPHY

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### DUTY\*

PROFESSOR A. MACBEATH

THE tendency towards analysis and criticism, realism and pluralism, which has been evident in general philosophy during the present century has had important effects on recent ethical discussion. Its influence is to be seen in the two theories which on account of their prominence and the number of their disciples may be said to be most characteristic of the period—Ideal Utilitarianism and the New Intuitionism—theories which no less an authority than Sir David Ross described as the rival theories. However different these theories are in many respects they have a tendency towards ethical pluralism, if not atomism—a tendency not only to emphasize distinctions but even to harden the distinguishable elements into independent, if not even unrelated, entities. The one leaves us with a series of independent goods and the other with a series of *prima facie* duties, with the result that neither gives us any unitary principle to help us in one of the principal tasks of the moral life, the attempt to discover what in particular circumstances we ought to do.

It seems to me not without significance in this connexion that these two theories, though by very different routes, arrive at the common conclusion that doing one's duty has as such no value, that indeed a man who has done his duty may in doing it have shown himself a morally bad man, and that for doing the action, which it was his duty to do, he may be morally blameworthy. The Ideal Utilitarian, whose appreciation of the value of moral goodness leaves something to be desired, says we have just to accept this paradox. The New Intuitionist, who recognizes the uniqueness of the value of moral goodness, is rather more uneasy about the position, but he sees no way of escape from it. To me such a conclusion seems not only paradoxical but in direct contradiction to the deliverance of the unsophisticated moral consciousness. For if there is anything

\* Paper read before the Metaphysical Society of Trinity College, Dublin.

## PHILOSOPHY

about which men who are not out to support a theory are agreed, it is this: To say of an action that in doing it a man has done his duty is to attribute moral value or worth to it. Some would go further and say that it is to attribute the highest or even the only moral worth to it. And while, as Aristotle tells us, we have in discussing ethical questions something to learn from both the many and the wise, when the two are in conflict, as they seem to be in this matter, the final appeal is to the many.

In this paper I propose to consider certain questions regarding the nature of duty and its relation to the other fundamental ethical concept, the good, questions which I think have largely arisen from the tendencies I have mentioned, and which have been prominent in recent ethical discussions. I want to submit tentatively, and without much elaboration, a view which seems to me to leave room for the distinctions and truths explained by recent theories, and at the same time to provide a principle which brings order and coherence into the moral life, a principle which, however difficult to apply in detail, gives us hope that the more we reflect the more likely we are to arrive at a right decision as to what we ought to do. That there is such a principle seems to be implied in our strong conviction of the reasonableness of moral action. It may be that monistic and idealistic ethics arrived at such a principle too easily, but, if we are not to be content to regard the moral life as a disorderly chaos, there seems to be no alternative to the belief that there is such a principle.

While construction rather than controversy is my aim, I shall develop my positive contentions by contrasting them with the New Intuitionism of Sir David Ross, not only because no one writing on ethics to-day can hope or deserve to carry conviction unless he comes to terms with the positions which Ross has explained and defended with such clarity and candour, but also because the theory which I wish to propound became much clearer for myself through this contrast, and especially because I wish to acknowledge how much I have learned from his stimulating treatment of ethical questions and his insight into moral facts, however much I may dissent from some of his conclusions.

In my discussion I shall try as far as possible to take the point of view of the moral agent faced with a practical situation calling for decision and action, rather than that of the external observer passing judgement on the actions of other people. Too much reliance on the latter point of view is apt to lead to the atomism which is characteristic of so much recent ethical theory. Only a person who adopts it, or so at least it seems to me, could come to the conclusion that actions performed with different motives are the same, provided the change initiated by them is the same.

Let us begin with the idea of good, and confine ourselves to what

## DUTY

is good not merely as a means but as an end or in itself. Of anything good in this sense we can, at least, say that it is an object of the pro-attitude, that is, it is an object enjoyed when present (taking enjoyment as the common element in admiration, approval, satisfaction and liking), longed for when absent and desired when absent and believed to be capable of being achieved by our efforts. Among things good in this sense are the pursuit and attainment of knowledge, the promotion and enjoyment of friendship, the production and experience of beauty, the enjoyment of health and some measure of the conditions of material well-being. The goodness which we attribute to such things seems to me incapable of being understood except in relation to the nature, the needs, and the interests of human beings. For example, if man were not a social being, the production of friendship would not be good. If he were not curious, the pursuit of knowledge would not be good. If he did not dislike pain, there would be no goodness in attempts to alleviate it. The goodness of such things is a relational property depending on their capacity to satisfy certain elements in human nature.

But, on account of the limitations of our nature, we cannot pursue all these goods at once, nor should we pursue any of them all the time; nor yet can we decide which of them we ought to pursue here and now merely by considering which of them taken by itself in isolation is best. In this connexion, there seems to me to be a serious defect in such a comparison of goods as that made by Ross in his *Foundations of Ethics*. According to such a comparison one good, e.g. knowledge, is considered intrinsically better than another, e.g. pleasure, with the suggestion that in any circumstances in which we have to choose between goods the intrinsically better should be chosen. But it seems to me that in actual life circumstances arise in which it is my duty to pursue, e.g. the conditions of material well-being rather than knowledge, even though I am satisfied that there is a sense in which knowledge when considered by itself is better than material well-being. How then am I to discover which good I ought to promote here and now?

When the self-conscious being reaches a certain level of maturity he builds up for himself a plan or policy of life which, as a whole and every element in which in its context, he believes will sustain the pro-attitude. I have no time to discuss the process by which the self builds up this ideal, but I think we can make the following assertions about it. (1) It is the result of experience—partly the experience of the race taken over by the individual, partly the experience of the individual himself. (2) It can be understood only in relation to the nature and needs of the individual: it is what he believes will enable him to realize his capacities and satisfy his needs. (3) Its unity is derived from the unity of the self's interests: it is



## PHILOSOPHY

what he believes will satisfy his self as a whole. (4) As the self is social as well as rational, this ideal has a social as well as a personal side: it is an ideal of personal development in an ideal community. No doubt, at any given moment, this ideal or policy may be neither clearly articulated nor completely unified and the community to which it refers may be very circumscribed, but it is the nature of a self-conscious being to have such an ideal; and the more reflective and enlightened the individual, the more unified and comprehensive his ideal.

Now it seems to me that it is in the light of such an ideal or policy that we judge which goods we ought to promote here and now. What the realization of the ideal requires in particular circumstances we call right or fitting or suitable. It is not only good in the sense that, considered by itself, it is an object of the pro-attitude, but in the circumstances it is best; and in these circumstances anything else, even if considered by itself it is an object of the pro-attitude, is bad, and the pursuit of it is wrong. If this is so, consideration of the relative values of different goods in the abstract or apart from a plan of life is misleading. While all the goods I have mentioned are worthy of being pursued at some time or in some context, and while, human nature being what it is and having the needs and interests it has, the ideal which is to satisfy it must include these goods, nevertheless the limitations of our nature prevent us from realizing them or pursuing them all at once; and, therefore, in a given situation we may have to choose between one and others. We choose between them, not by considering their merits in the abstract, but by considering them in relation to a whole or system into which they do or do not fit and with which they are or are not harmonious. What should be realized here and now is not only good in the sense of being an object of the pro-attitude, that is, relative to the satisfaction of some element in human nature, but also suitable or fitting relative to the good of the self as a whole and relative to the requirements of an ideal social order. For, man (1) has particular needs, (2) is reasonable or self-conscious and (3) is social.

The goods, the objects of the pro-attitude, the elements in the ideal, which I have so far noticed, belong in the main to the personal side of the ideal; but there are others which are specially bound up with the relations of men to one another and so belong to the social rather than to the individual side of the ideal. Such are truth telling, benevolence, gratitude to benefactors, promise keeping, etc. These also considered by themselves are objects of the pro-attitude in the sense that, other things being equal, a community whose members act in these ways is considered good. Such actions, however, are good, not as the Utilitarians contend in the sense that their consequences considered in the abstract are good, but in the sense that

in relation to the whole situation, including what has happened in the past as well as their consequences, they are objects of the pro-attitude. For example, other things being equal, an act of giving ten pounds to a rich man when I might have used it to relieve the distress of a poor man, and when I am not able to do both, is not good in the sense that the state of affairs which results from my action is good. But, if the payment to the rich man is the fulfilment of a promise or the repayment of a loan, other things are not equal. As the Intuitionist contends, it is the fact that I have made a promise (not the consequences of the act of keeping it considered in the abstract) that makes the act of keeping it good or fitting; but if it were not for the fact that I had made the promise, my act now would not be an act of promise keeping but just the production of a state of affairs which could be considered by itself and judged good or bad. But when I have in fact made a promise the state of affairs in relation to which my act has to be considered is "promise made and kept by me,"—not the state of affairs produced by my act without relation to the fact that I made a promise. And, when we consider it in relation to the total actual situation, the act of promise keeping is good in the sense of being an object of the pro-attitude.

In the same way, my spending money on the education of a stranger may produce a state of affairs as good as my spending money on the education of members of my own family, and perhaps better if the stranger is likely to profit more by the education, but our attitude to the acts is different when we consider them in their contexts in relation to the whole state of affairs, that is, the relation of parent to his own children in the one case, and the relation of parent and stranger in the other; and perhaps also in relation to the present arrangements of our society in such matters.

It seems to me that it is only the atomizing tendency which considers such acts only in relation to one aspect of the situation, and not in relation to the total situation, which prevents the New Intuitionists from recognizing that the total state of affairs resulting from such acts is good as well as the acts themselves right.

And, just as in the case of personal goods, so in the case of these inter-personal goods, while each considered by itself is an object of the pro-attitude, it does not follow that it is so in every context or that it should be promoted on every occasion. We may have to choose between the promotion of different goods; and, then, which we should promote here and now can only be determined in the light of a policy or plan of life.

The same considerations apply to another class of goods which consist not so much in the promotion of positive goods as in the removal of evils and defects, such as, the relief of distress, the alleviation of pain, the removal of ignorance, the curing of disease;

though in many, if not most, such cases, it is difficult to draw a clear distinction between them and the production of positive goods. For the same act often removes evil and promotes positive good. Such goods also, when considered in the abstract, are objects of the pro-attitude, but in particular circumstances we may have to choose between one and another; and our choice can only be determined in the light of an ideal or policy of life.

And, not only may any of the goods in the different classes of goods I have mentioned come into conflict with another of the same class; but, partly because of the limitations of our nature which make it impossible for us to promote all goods at once, partly because of defects in our own or other people's past conduct as, e.g. when we have made incompatible promises, and partly because of circumstances beyond our control such as the desire of a person who is seriously ill to know a truth which might prejudicially affect his health, similar conflicts arise between goods in the different classes. We may, e.g. have to choose between the pursuit of knowledge and the relief of distress, between the promotion of friendship and telling the truth, between the production of beauty and the alleviation of pain; and we cannot decide which we should promote in particular circumstances merely by considering the different goods in abstraction, but only by considering the requirements of the ideal or policy. In other words, none of these goods is good unconditionally in the sense that it is a suitable object of the pro-attitude in every context. They are all good in the sense that, considered by themselves, they are suitable objects of the pro-attitude; and, therefore, each has its place in the ideal. Only the ideal itself can continuously sustain the pro-attitude. Other goods can sustain it only in their context as what is required by the ideal in particular circumstances. The goodness which an act or state of affairs has as being here and now the expression of the ideal we call its rightness. Its rightness, thus, depends on its fitting into a scheme or policy, the conceived good of the self as a whole.

Now it may be said that what is right is not only fitting or suitable, but that it is so in a unique way, a way not further definable, which can only be described by saying that it is *morally* fitting or suitable. The uniqueness of this kind of fittingness I do not doubt, but its uniqueness does not seem to me to prevent us from describing it further. What I want to suggest is that by morally fitting we mean fitting into a whole which is good and ultimately into the good of the self as a whole, just as by aesthetically fitting we mean fitting into a whole which is beautiful, and by intellectually fitting we mean fitting into a whole which satisfies the intellect or a whole of truth. In other words, by morally right or fitting we mean fitting into or required by the good of the self as a whole. What is fitting in this

## DUTY

sense is not only good but best. The ideal, which we use as a criterion in determining what is right or fitting in this sense, we sometimes call the moral ideal or moral end; but there seem to me to be serious objections to these descriptions, and especially to the latter. One objection is that the term "end" suggests a condition of affairs which is in the future and can be attained all at once; whereas the realization of the good of the self as a whole cannot be attained all at once but has to be spread out in time, and it can be partially realized in the present as well as in the future. Another objection is to calling it the *moral* end, for this ideal seems to me to consist of non-moral elements and not to be itself morally good at all. It is rather the non-morally best. Its relation to moral goodness will appear later.

When we contemplate this non-morally best or the good of the self as a whole, we not only take the pro-attitude towards it but we recognize that it has a claim upon us that we should try to realize it, in so far as it is possible to do so by our action. This claim, especially when it is opposed by other elements in our nature, as, e.g., by some of our inclinations and desires, is what we call the sense of obligation or the sense of duty. The sense of duty is, thus, the recognition or belief that something, which is in our power and opposed to our inclination, is best in the circumstances, that is, the expression of the ideal, and therefore right or fitting; together with the feeling of obligation or the desire to do it which this recognition or belief produces in us. If this is so, our particular duties are the requirements of the ideal or best, the good of the self as a whole, in particular circumstances; and these duties cannot be understood except in relation to the nature and needs of man. If that nature or those needs were different, the ideal would be different, and our duties would be different. The better we understand the nature of man and his needs, the more adequate our ideal and the more enlightened our conception of our duties. This is not to say that the sense of duty is not unique or that it can be analysed without remainder into other experiences. It is unique in being itself, and it requires a special term or terms to describe it, such as ought, obligation, duty. We can only describe it as the experience which a self-conscious being, who is also a creature of desires and inclinations rooted in natural instincts, has in the situation which I described above. If we put ourselves actually or in imagination in a situation in which what we believe to be best, not in its consequences but as fitting into our policy or ideal, is within our power and opposed to our inclination, the experience which we have is a sense of duty.

As has often been pointed out, we use the term "duty" and other similar terms like "ought" and "obligation" in more than one sense. For example, when in a particular situation I am trying to discover

## PHILOSOPHY

what my duty is, I am thinking of what is called my objective duty, that is, the act which would be the initiation of what is in fact the best or most fitting state of affairs in the circumstances. Duty in this sense is what I should recognize as best, if my knowledge of the circumstances and of the consequences of my action were entirely accurate, and if my insight into human nature and what it requires for its satisfaction were entirely adequate. It is what an omniscient and perfectly enlightened human being would regard as his duty. But I have complete knowledge neither of the facts of the objective situation nor of what my own nature requires for its satisfaction; and, for either or both of these reasons, I may make a mistake as to what my duty in this objective sense is. I may believe that something is my duty which in fact is not objectively best in the situation.

Now what I believe to be my objective duty is called my subjective duty; and my subjective duty is my actual duty here and now. What I believe to be objectively best is my operative ideal whose claim I recognize as binding on me. The difference between these two senses of duty is seen in the statement, "It is my duty to do what I believe to be my duty, even if I believe wrongly." In the first case duty means actual or subjective duty, whereas in the second case it means objective duty. So far I am glad to be able to claim the support of Sir David Ross, as against the position, which he once took and which others still take, that objective duty is actual duty; and, therefore, I do not propose to argue the question or to call attention to the paradoxes to which the latter position leads.

What I want to suggest is rather that both the meanings of duty, which we have so far considered and which are the only meanings which Ross recognizes, while quite normal and legitimate meanings of the term, are really elliptical and give us only one of the conditions which a dutiful act must satisfy. It is true that no act which does not satisfy this condition, that is, no act which does not aim at producing what is believed to be objectively best or to be objective duty, is a dutiful act; but an act may satisfy this condition and not be a dutiful act.

Moreover, it is true that, when I want to do my duty and am trying to discover what my duty is, this is the important condition; because in these circumstances the other condition, namely, the desire to do my duty and to do it because it is my duty, is normally satisfied. I am then, under the influence of the sense of duty, trying to discover the state of affairs which is objectively best and which my act should aim at initiating. This side of duty is the only one that can be seen by the external observer. It is the outward and visible side of duty, the side of duty with which alone the law is concerned, because it alone

## DUTY

can be enforced. But the act of duty has also an inner and spiritual side. It is the expression of a state of mind which is open only to the introspection of the agent. This side is what distinguishes an act from an event or occurrence which may also be the initiation of a state of affairs.

So much is common ground. It is also common ground that acts of duty are not only the expressions of states of mind but that they are consciously directed to ends. They are done with intentions and from motives. Where differences of opinion arise is when we ask what elements in these states of mind are included in the act of duty, in the sense of being relevant when we ask the question, "Have I done my duty?" Ross now admits, as we saw, that my *belief* as to what I ought to do is relevant. This is involved in his accepting the view that subjective duty is actual duty. Moreover, in reply to the criticism that his earlier view reduced the act of duty to an event or an occurrence, the initiation of a state of affairs, he admits the relevance of a further element in the agent's state of mind, namely, his *intention*. He points out that the act of duty is an intentional act, an act in which I consciously set myself to initiate a state of affairs. Accordingly, Ross's latest view admits that, when we are considering whether a person has done his duty, it is relevant to consider his belief and his intention; but he still denies that it is relevant to consider his motive; and he holds that, as long as the state of affairs intended by him is the same, the agent's act is the same whatever the motive.

This still seems to me unsatisfactory; and I would suggest that the line of argument which has led Ross to include belief and intention in the act of duty makes it necessary to include motive as well. It is, no doubt, true that it is difficult to get any satisfactory and generally accepted line of demarcation between motive and intention. The intention is sometimes said to be the foreseen consequences, the motive those of the foreseen consequences for the sake of which the action is done. At other times, the intention is said to be the nearer and the motive the more remote foreseen consequences. In either of these senses it is difficult to see why the intention and not the motive should be included in the act of duty. Sometimes, however, by motive is meant an emotion or feeling or desire, and then different considerations arise. But without going into these questions, we may for the present confine our attention to one motive—the sense of duty. If we consider a situation in which X which it is within my power to produce is right (i.e. my objective duty), Ross would describe my sense of duty, or my sense that X is my duty, as the belief (or recognition) that X is right, together with the desire to do X which this produces in me. If there is no such belief (or recognition) on my part, it is not my subjective or actual duty to do X. If with

this belief I do X which is an intentional act, I do it believing it to be right or my duty, that is, I do it as my duty. If, however, I do X, not as right or as my duty, but as the cause of Y, my act is a different act even if to the outside observer it appears the same; and I have not done my duty. If, for example, I pay a man ten pounds which I owe him as the payment of a debt, believing it to be right or my duty to do so, I have done one act; and I have done my duty. If, on the other hand, I pay the same ten pounds to the same man, to whom I owe it, not as the payment of a debt or a duty but as a means of inducing him to gamble, I have done a different act; and I have not done my duty. In other words, in order that I may be said to do my duty I must do the act which I believe to be my duty, as my duty, and not as a means to something else. If I do not believe an act to be my duty, I have no subjective or actual duty; and if I do not do it recognizing it to be what it is (i.e. my duty), I have not done my duty.

If an agent initiates a series of events or occurrences A, B, C, D, E, etc. the only way in which we can discover which of these are included in his act is by considering his state of mind at the time. His act may be A or B or C or D, etc. If I set myself to press the trigger of a rifle believing that it is not loaded, my act is A—pressing the trigger of a rifle. If I set myself to do A knowing that the rifle is loaded, my act is B—firing a rifle. If I set myself to do B believing that it will kill a man, my act is C—killing a man. If I set myself to do C believing that the man is a traitor, my act is D—killing a traitor. If I set myself to do D believing that it is right to kill a traitor, my act is E—an act of duty. From the point of view of the external observer, all these acts may be regarded as the same act, that is, the initiation of the same state of affairs, but from the point of view of the agent, the only point of view relevant to morality, each is a different act.

Now it seems to me that the minimum on which we can pass moral judgement is a whole act, that is, the initiation of the whole series of events foreseen by the agent. In the whole dutiful act in this sense there must be included the motive as well as the belief and intention. This I shall call the full sense of duty, as distinct from what I have called the elliptical sense. The latter is also a normal and legitimate sense, but it gives only one of the conditions which the complete act of duty must satisfy. The other condition which is equally necessary is that the act should be done from a sense of duty, that is, recognized as my duty and done for that reason.

The point on which I differ from Ross in this connexion may seem only a question of the use of the term "duty," but I think it is a great deal more. It is a question of the grounds on which we pass moral judgement. Even if there is a sense in which we might say that the

act irrespective of motive is right, I don't think we can say that it is morally right, as Ross does. Only the whole act, including motive, seems to me a proper subject of moral predicates of any kind; and an act done as my duty and the same act (i.e. the initiation of the same state of affairs) done for some other reason is not the same act, in any sense that is relevant for morality.

Duty in the full sense of the term seems to me to mean at least the minimum response to a situation that is required from a moral agent. I do not say it is all that is required of a moral agent (i.e., the ideal response of a moral agent) because, according to a commonly accepted sense of the term duty, it is my duty, e.g., to be just but not to be generous. Duty in this sense is what others have a right to expect of me; and, therefore, duties are roughly correlative with rights. If, however, we use the term duty, as we sometimes do, to mean the ideal response of a moral agent to a situation (or all that I should demand of myself) it may include more than others have a right to expect of me. For example, I may consider it my duty to forgive injuries, but others have no right to expect me to do so.

Now Ross refuses to accept either of these senses of duty (as either the minimum response that I can make to a situation and be moral or the ideal response of a moral agent) when he refuses to regard motive as part of the dutiful act. But both seem to me to be not only senses in which we regularly use the word but perfectly legitimate senses. Why then does Ross take the opposite view? He admits that there are certain facts, the natural interpretation of which seems to be that it is my duty not only to do a certain act but also to do it from a certain motive. "Suppose," he writes, "that a certain man pays a debt, but does it not from a sense of justice but solely in order to avoid a legal action against him; or suppose that he does it in order to tempt his creditor to reckless speculation with the money repaid; it seems natural to say that such a man has not done what he ought; that in the first case he has not done what he was obliged to do, and that in the second case he has done what he was definitely obliged not to do." (*Foundations of Ethics*, p. 115.) Here the natural interpretation seems to be that I have not done my duty unless my motive is good as well as my act directed to bringing about that which is right. But Ross rejects this interpretation of the facts on the ground that it leads to certain awkward consequences. It is these consequences and these alone which lead him to reject the natural interpretation of the facts illustrated in the example which I have quoted from him.

I want to suggest (1) that if we distinguish between the different senses of duty which I have mentioned, and grant one further condition, these awkward consequences do not in fact follow; and (2) that still more awkward consequences follow from Ross's own



## PHILOSOPHY

view that I have done my whole<sup>1</sup> duty if I have done the act which is my duty, even if I have done it from a bad motive. The chief of these is that, according to his view, I can be said to have done my whole duty in cases in which my acts in doing it are not merely valueless but morally reprehensible. With his usual candour Ross admits this consequence, but it seems to him less serious than those which seem to him to follow from making it my duty to act from a motive. What, then, are these awkward consequences? Ross mentions two.

The first is based on the generally accepted principle that "I ought implies I can," and that, therefore, it is never my duty to do what is impossible. Now at a given moment I either have a given motive or I don't have it; and if I don't have it I cannot call it into existence at a moment's notice by an act of will. Therefore, if I haven't got it, it cannot be my duty to act from it here and now.

With this argument I am in entire agreement (though I believe that in the process of deliberation we can at times influence our potential motives or even produce new ones), but what precisely does it prove in the present connexion? Nothing at all, it seems to me. For according to Ross's own theory, in any circumstances in which I have an actual duty I have the best of motives for doing it, namely, the sense of duty, which he himself rightly regards as the highest moral motive. His own description of the sense of duty is (1) the belief that a certain act is my duty (i.e., objective duty), together with (2) the desire, strong or weak, which this produces in me to do the act. I think that Ross would admit that where (1) is present (2) follows. Indeed he often uses the term "sense of duty" of (1) alone.

Now, we already saw that my actual duty here and now is my subjective duty, i.e., to do what I believe to be my objective duty. Unless, therefore, I have the belief that X is my duty I have no actual duty to do X. But if I have such a belief, I have a sense that it is my duty to do X. So that in any case in which I have an actual or subjective duty I have a sense of duty; and, therefore, it is not necessary for me by an act of will to produce a motive from which to act. The motive sense of duty is there already.

But Ross's argument seems to imply that, even if the sense of duty (or any other motive) is present, it may not be strong enough to stimulate me to action; and that if it isn't I cannot by an act of will so strengthen it as to make it prevail; so that it may remain a potential and not become an actual motive at all. That, in fact, is the position which Ross as a consistent determinist is bound to take,

<sup>1</sup> It is true that Ross admits (*Foundations of Ethics*, p. 112) that the man who does his duty from a bad motive has not performed the whole duty of man: he has failed to do one of his most important duties, that of cultivating in himself the sense of duty. But that refers to the man's past. His whole duty here and now is to do an act irrespective of motive.

and when we combine with this position the principle that it is never my duty to do what is impossible, the conclusion follows that it is never my duty to act from a sense of duty (or from any other potential motive). This conclusion, however, follows not from the principle "I ought implies I can" but from that principle combined with the assumption of determinism; and to deny the conclusion it is enough to deny one of the premises. I am not, of course, going to discuss the question of freedom and determinism here; but the assumption of freedom in the sense of freedom called "the freedom of open alternatives" is the one condition which I referred to above as necessary, if the awkward consequences to which Ross has called attention are not to follow from the position which I am defending. For the minimum of such freedom which has ever been claimed by its defenders is freedom to make or not to make the effort of will required so to strengthen the sense of duty, when it is weak, as to enable it to prevail over other potential motives, that is, freedom to make or not to make the effort required to turn the potential motive sense of duty into an actual motive. Granted such freedom, there is nothing in Ross's first argument to prevent motive from being regarded as a part of duty. For whenever we have an actual duty the sense of duty is there to act as a motive. If, therefore, it is always possible for me by an effort of will to turn this potential motive into an actual motive, it is possible for me not only to do the act which is my duty but to do it from a sense of duty.

Ross's second argument to prove that it cannot be my duty to act from a motive applies only to the motive sense of duty. It runs as follows. If I say "It is my duty to act from a sense of duty" and make my statement definite, I find that it contradicts itself; and when I try to amend my statement so as to avoid the contradiction, the statement is found to involve an infinite regress. For it reads "It is my duty to do act X from the sense that it is my duty to do act X, from the sense that it is my duty to do act X, from the sense etc. . . . ad infinitum." (*Foundations of Ethics*, pp. 117-18).

These difficulties, however, are based on the assumption that I am using the term "duty" in the same sense in the different parts of my statement, and they disappear if we distinguish between "my whole duty," "my subjective duty" and "my objective duty." For then the statement reads "It is my whole duty (i.e., what is morally required of me in the situation) to do my subjective duty (i.e., what I believe to be my objective duty) from the sense (i.e., my motive for doing it being the sense) that it is my objective duty." Here there is neither contradiction nor infinite regress but the simple statement that it is my duty to do what I believe to be right because I believe

"Because" here gives not my reason for believing it to be right but my motive for doing it.

## PHILOSOPHY

it to be right. To recognise the distinctions mentioned above is only to carry one step further the line of argument used by Ross himself when he accepts the view that the belief of the agent enters into the act of duty. That view, too, appears to give rise to a contradiction and would in fact do so, if we were using the term "duty" in one sense only; as, for example, in the statement "It is my duty to do what I believe to be my duty." Ross avoids this contradiction by drawing a distinction between objective and subjective duty. A further distinction between these and whole duty avoids the contradiction to which he calls attention in the above argument.

The same distinction provides the answer to two other arguments which Ross puts forward in support of his view. (*Foundations of Ethics*, p. 123.) In both of these arguments Ross is discussing considerations which arise when I am trying to discover what my duty is. He is, therefore, dealing with objective duty and easily shows that motive does not enter into the content of duty so understood. But if we make the distinction between objective duty and whole duty, we cannot argue from the fact that motive is not part of the former to the conclusion that it is not part of the latter, any more than we can argue, according to Ross's own doctrine, from the fact that belief is not part of objective duty to the conclusion that it is not part of subjective duty.

I conclude, therefore, that none of the awkward consequences that led Ross to reject the view that motive is a part of the dutiful act do in fact follow, provided only that man is free. Granted that proviso, we have no reason to reject what Ross himself regards as the natural interpretation of the facts, namely, that it is my duty not only to do a particular act but to do it from a sense of duty; and we are confirmed in this interpretation by the awkward consequence, already noted, which follows from the opposite view as worked out by Ross himself.

I want to conclude this paper by considering the relation of moral goodness to the dutiful act and to the ideal in the light of which we determine what our particular duties are, an ideal which I have hitherto described in non-moral terms. This ideal is usually called the moral ideal, and though, for reasons which I have already stated, I consider the description misleading I shall continue to use it. Moral goodness seems to me to stand in a quite different relation to this ideal from that in which other goods stand to it. Moral goodness is not something at which we aim directly, though we may aim at conditions which facilitate it. It is rather something which finds expression or is manifested in our pursuit of other goods. What is morally good is the good will, and the good will finds expression in the pursuit of the non-morally best, i.e. whatever is in the circumstances believed to be required by the good of the self as a whole.

If this is so, the dutiful act is good both in the moral and the non-moral sense. It is in fact the meeting point of the non-morally best, the good of the self as a whole, and the good will which alone is morally good and which alone is good in every context. The act of duty is directed towards or aims at producing the former; and it is an expression of the latter. It aims at initiating the state of affairs which is right or fitting—a state of affairs which is the best in the circumstances but the non-morally best; and it aims at initiating it from a sense of duty and so is morally good.

Such a reading of the situation seems to me not only to account for the main facts of the moral life in a way which avoids the difficulties and paradoxes of many other theories. It even helps us to see the sources of these difficulties and paradoxes. In the first place, it enables us to avoid the vicious circle which has often been pointed out in the teaching of Kant and Green and many idealists who hold that the object of the good will is the good will, or, as it is sometimes put, that the moral ideal is the pursuit of the moral ideal. As against this position, I suggest that the good will finds expression in the pursuit of non-moral goods, when these are pursued because they are best in the circumstances. There is a sense in which it is our duty to be morally good, but we cannot be morally good in the abstract. To be morally good is to perform our particular duties in the spirit of duty. In other words, to be morally good is to manifest a good will; and a good will is manifested in setting oneself to initiate the particular state of affairs which here and now seems best, in the sense of being what the moral ideal or the good of the self as a whole here and now requires. It may be an act of kindness, the fulfilment of a promise, the pursuit of knowledge, the relief of distress, the production of beauty, or whatever else the ideal here and now requires. Moreover, the good will does not derive its goodness from the particular goods or ends at which it aims but rather from its own nature as being the conscious pursuit of the best. But it is its nature to try to realize particular ends, though not as such but as the expression of the ideal.

In the second place, this view gives to moral goodness the unique position claimed for it by the moral consciousness and by most ethical writers. For, according to it, moral goodness not being part of the end aimed at, but rather realized in the pursuit of the end, does not come into conflict with other goods. We are not called upon to choose between the pursuit of knowledge or beauty or pleasure and moral goodness or virtue. We are called upon to choose between the different non-moral goods, that is, to choose between the different goods other than virtue or moral goodness; and when we choose whichever is best, and pursue it for that reason, we realize or express our moral goodness in the pursuit, and the pursuit is morally good.

## PHILOSOPHY

There are, in fact, no duties which are not moral duties but there are no duties which are merely moral duties, that is, duties to be moral and nothing more. Our moral duties are also duties to do particular acts. This explains why a theory, like the New Intuitionism, which insists on comparing moral goodness with other forms of goodness, as if we had to choose between the different kinds, gets into the paradoxical situations to which Ross calls attention (*Foundations of Ethics*, p. 284) but from which on his theory we cannot escape. The paradoxes arise from the fact that, according to such a theory, it is legitimate to ask such questions as "whether in any given situation it is rather our duty to promote some good moral activity or some good intellectual activity in ourselves." On the view which I am defending such a question is not legitimate. For, if in any given situation it is my duty to promote some good intellectual activity, it is my moral duty to do so; and, therefore, in promoting the good intellectual activity I am in the same act promoting a good moral activity. So that there can be no conflict between the two. The alternatives with which actual life presents us are, for example, between a good intellectual activity and doing an act of kindness or a piece of social service or taking a rest in the interests of our health. The alternatives are never between any of these and doing our moral duty. If in the circumstances it is best or right that I should engage in some intellectual activity, then it is my moral duty to do so; and the other so-called duties are not my actual duties at all but what would be my duties, if the circumstances were different and if it were not here and now my duty to engage in intellectual activity.

It seems to me no small advantage of the theory I am advocating that it saves us from unreal paradoxes of this kind, paradoxes which arise from theories which regard moral goodness as one among several goods between which we may be called on to choose. According to such theories, moral goodness must be comparable, if not even commensurable, with other goods; and yet the deliverance of the moral consciousness compels them to regard it as "infinitely superior" to all other goods. The present theory takes the view that no conflicts between moral goodness and other goods arise; so that no choice or comparison between it and them is necessary. It is good in a different sense or a good of a different order from all other goods.

In the third place, this theory enables us to reconcile two convictions of the moral consciousness which many theories seem to find in conflict. The one is that in the good life there are other goods besides moral goodness, that it includes, for example, such goods as knowledge, aesthetic experience, happiness, friendship, etc. The other is that morality is concerned with the whole of life and has jurisdiction over all of it. According to the present theory, moral

## DUTY

goodness and these other goods enter into the good life in different ways and not only do not conflict but are necessary to one another. The latter are the ends to which it is directed, the former is realized in the pursuit of them. On the other hand, in any set of circumstances there is something that is right or best, and the good will is revealed in the pursuit of that, whatever in detail it happens to be; so that there is no situation in which the good will cannot be realized, because there is none in which moral considerations are irrelevant.

In the fourth place, in the conception of the moral ideal as the conceived good of the self as a whole, this theory provides a unitary principle for the determination of our duties; and at the same time it leaves room for progress in the moral life; for, according to it, we are in the moral life engaged, in the spirit of adventure and experiment, on a task which can never be completed.

And, finally, it enables us to account for and understand the enormous differences between the things which different men and different nations at different stages in human history have regarded as good, and pursued in the confident belief that they were right, and in the no less confident belief that in pursuing them they were themselves being morally good—facts which are difficult to reconcile with the intuitionist theory.

# BUDDHA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE IN INDIAN CULTURE

PROFESSOR A. R. WADIA

FEW people would care to deny, whether within India or without, that Buddha is the greatest Indian of all times. Whether from the standpoint of the purity of his life, the daring originality and novelty of his thought, or the extent of his influence in shaping the culture of the world, it would be hard to beat the record of Buddha. Even making every allowance for the common idea that no man is a prophet in his own land, it is difficult to believe that for the last thousand years Buddha has been practically an exile from the land of his birth. It is nothing short of an irony of history, and nothing short of a tragedy for India, that the great unifying force that he represented in his time and does represent even to-day has been allowed to run waste and the great moral stamina that he sought to supply failed in its historic mission.

It is the purpose of this essay to study this irony of history and to explain it in terms of the paradox that Buddha was too un-Indian for his thought to take root in India; in short, that his thought was so revolutionary that it came to be accepted for a time only by compromising with his fundamental ideas and sometimes even by giving them up altogether. And a time came in the history of Buddhism in India when the inner decay synchronized with the environmental forces, and a strangling of Buddhism in India became inevitable.

The history of every religion goes to show a certain continuity of thought, and the greatest prophets have come not so much as revolutionaries but as reformers. Zoroaster in ancient Iran claimed to revive the old faith in Ahura Mazda as the one and only God. The Old Testament goes to show how every Hebrew prophet only claims to protest against the worship of the false gods that had been insidiously corroding the life of the Israelites, and to lead them back again to the pure worship of Jahweh. Even Christ did not disclaim his Hebrew heritage. He was well versed in the Prophets and could quote them to justify his own teaching. He was conscious of his historic position when he frankly proclaimed: "I have come to fulfil, not to destroy." Mahomed the Arab drew his religious inspiration from the Jews and the Christians and the Zoroastrians. His teaching did mark a total revolt against the old Arabian paganism, but he could establish his religion in Arabia only by adapting his new religion to some of the old customs of Arabia. The sanctity of

## BUDDHA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE

the Kaaba, the limitation of polygamy to four wives, the continuance of slavery, the maintenance of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca are some of the features of Islam rooted in the history of pre-Islamic Arabia, and are intelligible only in the light of this history.

So too with Buddha. He was born a Hindu in the Kshatriya caste. He inherited the old belief in the doctrine of Karma and the transmigration of souls: the two main ideas on which he raised the superstructure of his own philosophy.

He accepted in a naive fashion the popular ideas of heavens and hells and gods, but without attaching the slightest importance to them. In fact, if any great teacher can be charged with agnosticism, not with definite atheism, it is Buddha. Whether he was the founder of a religion or of a philosophy is a vexed question and it turns very much on what exactly we mean by religion and philosophy. If by religion we mean faith in some power beyond us and a certain number of dogmas to be accepted as revealed truths, Buddha was certainly not the founder of a religion, though in subsequent centuries his followers did deify him and dogmatically accepted his dicta as unchallengeable truths. Buddhism did become a religion but this was the work of his followers, not of Buddha himself. He certainly sought to preach his own doctrines logically and as pure rationalism, and so he was certainly the founder of a philosophical system.

His early upbringing was on normal orthodox lines. By every law of psychology and eugenics he should have grown up a normal orthodox Hindu, but by all the undiscovered laws of the psychology of genius he did not. Through his own efforts he outgrew the limitations of his own education and attained Enlightenment and became the Buddha, a great thinker, but also a great rebel in the cultural history of India.

### I

We shall now proceed to bring out the revolutionary nature of Buddha's teaching. The flame of the torch he lighted flickered and shone at times with intensity in India till it passed on its light to Eastern Asia, but died out in its own homeland. All his main teachings went against the grain of Hindu psychology and so could not take an abiding root in India.

(1) Orthodox Hinduism ultimately rests on the divine authority of the Vedas. In the last resort the *Sabda pramāṇa*—the authority of revelation as in the Vedas—is the basis of Hindu religion and of Hindu philosophy as well. Though a few thinkers may have tried to be purely logical in their arguments, at one stage or another they



## PHILOSOPHY

would bring in the authority of the Vedas as the final rounding up of their logical conclusions. Even the Upanishads, which are so markedly different from the Vedas in their method and in their contents, are looked upon as a part of the Vedas. An orthodox Hindu expects every non-Hindu to take this at its face value, when it is not difficult to see that the Upanishads themselves have effected a silent revolution against the whole naive mentality of the Vedas. All the best systems of Hindu thought seek to establish themselves on the safe rocks of the Authorities, even when the original authors of the Authorities would not be able to recognize their own thought in the subtle commentaries of the philosophers, who are afraid to emphasize and proclaim openly the novelty of their own thought. Not so Buddha. From the very beginning he struck the note of revolt when he repudiated all authority and all traditions. In the *Anguttara* he is reported to have said: "Do not accept what you hear by report; do not accept tradition; do not accept a statement because it is found in our books, nor because it is in accord with your belief, nor because it is the saying of your teacher."<sup>1</sup> Buddha throws a heavy responsibility on his hearers when he expects them to think for themselves, when it is ever so much easier to quote some authority and avoid the trouble of thinking. The subsequent history of Buddhism shows how difficult this advice was found to be, and Buddhism itself became a mass of authority hardly distinguishable in its method from the orthodox systems of Hindu philosophy. In fact in this respect the Buddhism of the Buddhists marks a distinct reversion to the type of thought typically Indian.

(2) More than any other people in the world the Hindus are metaphysical. The Hindu mind revels in the subtleties of logic within the framework of the Authorities, and is never so happy as in discussing metaphysical problems, even though such discussions involve merely endless discussions of the original authorities. Oddly enough Buddha was not a Hindu enough to be interested in metaphysical questions. But his immediate environment was Hindu to the core, and his immediate followers were Hindus by birth with centuries of metaphysics ingrained in their blood. Their mind could not rest content without probing into the ultimate mysteries of the universe. They would go to Buddha as their ancestors had gone to the Upanishadic seers, but Buddha was no Janaka or Yājñavalkya. The metaphysical inquirers got a cold douche: "Of what use are these questions? How do they make a man more moral? How do they help a man to gain salvation (nirvāṇa)?" And so the Enlightened One brushed aside these inquiries as we tend to brush aside our children's perplexing queries, however natural they be. Buddha aimed at being scientific and precise, and preferred to have his feet

<sup>1</sup> As abridged by Pratt on p. 15 of his *Pilgrimage of Buddhism*.

## BUDDHA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE

on the terra firma of his own experience. Hence the great paradox that in the nation of metaphysicians its greatest teacher was content to be a non-metaphysician.

(3) The Vedas sing of gods, some intrinsically good and righteous, but all of them mighty, all of them liable to be cajoled through prayers, and at times even made subservient through the magical force of incantations, and *tapas* or ascetic religious devotion. Orthodox Hinduism, especially of the teeming masses, is inconceivable without its gods and goddesses, its temples and its priests. But now comes Buddha and he makes light work of all these mighty gods and goddesses: Do they exist at all: Indra with his Apsarases, the Asvins and the Maruts, Aditi and the Ādityas? Perhaps they do! Buddha is not concerned to deny their existence. So far as his recorded assertions are concerned, he cannot be said to have been a confirmed atheist. Perhaps he may be better described as an agnostic. Their existence or non-existence does not interest him, for man's salvation does not depend on them. For him man is literally the architect of his own fortune and in his last address to his disciples he boldly proclaimed: "Therefore be ye islands unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge unto yourselves. Betake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast to the truth as an island (of security). Look not for shelter to any one besides yourselves." If this was Buddha's teaching, what need was there to bother about the existence or non-existence of gods? Perhaps there is an element of exaggeration when Dahlke declares that "Buddhism stands in opposition to all other religions without distinction, in that these are only differently moulded forms of belief; it alone is unbelief, given a habitation and a name."<sup>1</sup> It is an exaggeration, because it is a case not so much of unbelief as of indifference. This attitude of indifference is reduced to a *reductio ad absurdum* in a later Buddhistic legend when the idols of Indra and Shiva and other gods are represented as leaving their pedestals to bow before the Buddha! It is open to anyone to conclude that gods that can bow before mortals cease to be gods. But it is also possible to conclude that the superiority of Buddha is brought out all the more effectually when the gods are not denied their existence, but are shorn of all their pride and glory.

A religion without a god is an impossibility, and if in theistic India Buddhism was to have any place at all, it had to develop into a religion, and it did so not by reinstating the old Vedic gods, but by creating a brand new god in Buddha himself. The deification of Buddha finds no justification in the life or teaching of Buddha himself. But the logic of religion necessitated this transformation when the human process of venerating the mortal relics of Buddha, his teeth and his bones, blossomed forth into Mahāyāna Buddhism. It

<sup>1</sup> *Buddhist Essays*, p. 358.

## PHILOSOPHY

means that the Buddhists lost faith in their own self-help, and in the agony of their helpless souls deified Buddha, raised colossal statues to him and bowed down before them to secure his grace. There was a certain logic in this process. The man that had taken birth an endless number of times as a Bodhisattva just to help, not merely human beings, but even hares and tigers and lions, cannot be looked upon as having lost all that old spirit of helpfulness merely because he had become a Buddha. Surely a Buddha should be more powerful and influential than a mere Bodhisattva. If so, what can be more natural than to pray to that unseen Buddha, made visible through the genius of painters and sculptors? And so the world has witnessed the most wonderful phenomenon in the history of religion; the transformation of the agnostic Buddhism of Buddha into the full-blooded theism of the Mahāyāna Buddhists. Buddhism has become a religion of deliverance: the Buddhist ceased to be a lamp unto himself. It was Buddha himself that had to be a lamp to all the world, to be the refuge of the ill and the suffering. Buddha the man of love and mercy became the god of love and mercy.

It remains an open question how long agnostic Buddhism could have survived. But through its theistic transformation it certainly gained a fairly long lease of life in India, and has survived as a vital force till this day in the lands of the rising sun. The humming of *OM MANI PADME OM* by the Buddhist monks makes us alive to the fact that Buddhism still lives, and in it the man Buddha, who was perhaps the greatest single force to free man from the fear of the gods. Even his erstwhile enemies, the orthodox Hindus, tried to make peace with him by honouring him as an *avatar* of Vishnu, but not to be worshipped. In the temple at Gayā and the rock-cut temples at Ajanta, bells rang and litanies were sung before the images of Buddha, but that was a thousand years ago. To-day the bats in their love for darkness haunt those sacred places, and the tourist pays his casual visit and wonders at the glory that was Buddha, at the nothingness that is Buddha in India to-day. Was this the Nirvāṇa that the Master hunted for through countless centuries of births and deaths? Anyway, through his beautiful images he seems to smile in benignity at the follies of men, who deified him against his will and clear teaching, and have now left him to the company of bats and the assiduous solicitude of the archaeologists.

(4) Ascetics have a tremendous fascination for the orthodox Hindu mind. The power of the *tapas* (austerities) and the wonders it can bring about even to the extent of making the gods in their heavens tremble with fright are all a part and parcel of the religious folklore of India. The ascetics are still a power in this ancient land of ours. The Vedic age was much nearer to the time of Buddha than it is to us. No wonder if even he felt the lure of asceticism and tried

## BUDDHA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE

to win his way to Enlightenment through the most austere practices that he could think of. The result, however, was a tremendous disappointment and is graphically described by Buddha himself:

"I remember when a crab-apple was my only daily food. I remember when a single grain of rice was my only daily food. And by only partaking of a single grain of rice a day as my food, my body became extremely thin and lean; like dried-up withered reeds became my arms and legs; my hips like a camel's hoof; like a pleat of hair my spine. As project the rafters of a house's roof, so raggedly stuck out my ribs. As in a deep-lying brook the watery mirror beneath appears so small as almost to disappear, so the deep hollows of my eye-pits, my eye-balls, wellnigh wholly disappeared. As a gourd becomes shrivelled up and hollow in the hot sun, so did the skin of my head become parched and withered. And pressing my stomach, my hand touched my spine, and feeling my spine, my hand felt through to the stomach in front. And when I rubbed my limbs, the hair upon them came out rotten at the roots. And yet with all this rigorous mortification I came no jot nearer to the rich supernatural felicity of clearness of knowledge."

It would be hard to beat such a wonderful word-picture. If, however, a man is so dense as not to be able to visualize what Buddha must have looked like after this diet of a single grain of rice a day, he has only to visit the museum at Lahore, and he will see there a small statue of emaciated Buddha, which must have been inspired by this wonderful word-picture of the Master himself.

Buddha was disillusioned by this extreme type of asceticism. It paved the way for his immortal discovery of the Middle Path, the beauty of the golden mean: neither too much nor too little. But he did not fail to grasp one important truth which underlies every ascetic endeavour: that it is a means to self-discipline, and to that extent it is a means of training the body to serve the higher purposes of the spirit. In one place he says: "Though my body is sick, my mind shall not be sick! Thus must you train yourself." Asceticism of the right kind is an attempt to conquer our lower self: "If one man conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, and if another conquers himself, he is the greatest of conquerors." "A knife, if it be caught by the blade, cuts the hand. Asceticism wrongly practised leads to the downward path," and so says Buddha: "I preach asceticism inasmuch as I preach the burning away of all conditions of the heart that are evil. One who so does is a true ascetic." And so in the *Dhammapada* the Bhikshu is thus described:

"Restraint in the eye is good, good is the restraint in the ear, in the nose restraint is good, good is restraint in the tongue. In the

## PHILOSOPHY

body restraint is good, and good is restraint in speech, in thought restraint is good, good is restraint in all things. A Bhikshu, restrained in all things, is freed from all pain. He who controls his hand, he who controls his feet, he who controls his speech, he who is well controlled, he who delights inwardly, who is collected, who is solitary and content, him they call Bhikshu. . . .

Let him live in charity, let him be perfect in his duties; then in the fullness of delight he will make an end of suffering."<sup>1</sup>

There are indeed certain passages in the *Dhammapada* which hover dangerously near a certain type of selfishness, may be enlightened selfishness, but selfishness all the same. The fact that Buddha did not write set essays, but propounded his teaching in the form of dialogues and parables, is apt to make for some apparent inconsistencies, such as we find in Plato's *Dialogues*. But in all such cases we have to look to the general spirit of a particular master's teaching, and in Buddha's case there can be no possible getting over the fact that his first and foremost interest was morality. Morality is essentially social, it can have no meaning for the solitary recluse, and this we find confirmed by the beautiful statement of Buddha: "The odour of flowers travels not against the wind, nor that of the sandal, nor the fragrant powder of frankincense or jasmine. But the sweet odour of good men travels with the wind and against it." We shall bring this out all the more clearly when we come to speak of Buddha's Ethics.

(5) Much as Buddha wished to avoid metaphysics, he could not completely do so, and we find this in his somewhat negative doctrine of self: *anatta*. That man has an immortal soul is one of the cardinal principles of all great religions. The Upanishadic doctrine of *Ātman* implies some sort of entity which does not die with the physical body, but which has the power of being reborn in other physical bodies. The nature of this rebirth is governed by one's past actions: as a man sows so must he reap. The Zoroastrian eschatology of heaven and hell has been borrowed by the Jews and Christians and the Muslims alike. The Vedic eschatology also provides for a *svarga* (heaven) and *naraka* (hell). But by the time of the Upanishads the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul came to be well established. The Upanishadic seers were alive to the sense of suffering and they sought a way out of this cycle of births and deaths. They proceeded on the assumption that there is an entity called an individual *ātman* which in the last analysis is identical with the ultimate *Ātman*. And when this identity is realized whether through *jñāna* (knowledge) or *karma* (actions) or *bhakti* (prayers and devotion), the travail of the individual soul or *ātman* is ended and there is *Moksha* (salvation).

<sup>1</sup> Max-Müller's translation.

## BUDDHA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE

Buddha accepted the idea of rebirth and it was open to him to follow the beaten path of accepting the soul entity as well. But he was nothing if not original and even revolutionary. Buddha in his attempt to avoid metaphysics tries to give a purely psychological account of self. He accepts the old Upanishadic account of the five *khandhas* ("aggregates of bodily and psychical states which are immediate with us"<sup>1</sup>) comprising body, feeling, conceptual knowledge, *sankhāras* ("synthetic mental states and the synthetic functioning of compound sense-affections, compound feelings and compound concepts"<sup>2</sup>), and lastly consciousness. Over and above all this is *tanhā* or craving, which leads to actions, and the results of these actions are stored up as individual *karma*<sup>3</sup> and lead to rebirths. That the quality of rebirth is moral in the last resort there can be no question. But that this rebirth is not of an entity but of *karma* is the novel feature of Buddha's teaching. If it is argued that a continuity of births must necessarily imply the continuity of an entity we are confronted with the analogy of a torch lighting other torches or of a river flowing continuously, though the water is continually changing. So too, it is asserted, a man's *karma* determines the body it builds up for its abode. Buddha was conscious of the difficulty of making others grasp his meaning. "This *dhamma* is profound," says he, "recondite, hard to comprehend, rare, excellent, beyond dialectic, subtle, only to be understood by the wise." And even the wise have found it a difficult knot to unravel. He is questioned on this by one wandering ascetic, Vaccha, and Buddha asks him whether he knows where the fire goes after it goes out—does it go east or west, north or south? Vaccha protests that the question is not fairly put, for the fire goes out when there is no more fuel to sustain it. And the Enlightened One takes him at his word and discourses: "Just in the same way, Vaccha, all things material—feelings, perceptions, forces, consciousness—everything by which the Arahant might be denoted, has passed away from him. Profound, measureless, unfathomable is the Arahant (finally emancipated) even as the mighty ocean, reborn does not apply to him nor not-reborn, nor any combination of such terms." We seem to be lost in the proverbial mazes of metaphysics. Individual *karma* in the sense of actions may be as fleeting and transient as the flame of a torch or the waters of a river, but if it has to bear fruit in a moral rebirth, it must have some sort of unity, the actions cannot all be hanging loose, for after all they are the actions

<sup>1</sup> Dasgupta's *History of Indian Philosophy*, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

<sup>3</sup> It should perhaps be explained to the European reader that "karma" is the Indian (Hindu as well as Buddhist) technical term for the sum total of the individual's actions *plus* their particular and general consequences. It is a *collective* term, properly used only in the singular in this sense. When the plural is used at all (Sanskrit *karmāns*) it refers to any actions of an individual without the specific impute of *fateful* actions—ED.

of one and the same individual, whom in his fleeting existence we call Rama or Gopal, John or George. We may not be able to describe that unity in terms intelligible to all, for even the idea of an immortal soul or *ātman* is a hypothesis necessitated by the demands of our moral and social life. That is why scholars like Pratt and Stcherbatsky are driven by the logic of life to admit that some sort of unity must be presupposed, if the doctrine of transmigration is to have any meaning. Sir Charles Eliot finds in the doctrine of *anatta* "not a speculative proposition, nor a sentimental lament over the transitoriness of the world, but a basis for religion and morals. You will never be happy unless you realize that you can make and remake your own soul."<sup>1</sup> But in this very justification of *anatta*, which literally means "not oneself," Sir Charles has been constrained to use the word *soul*, and the question immediately arises: is soul a mere summation of actions or is it something organic which has the power of welding together these actions into a unified whole? And the question takes us back to where we started. One wonders whether Buddha was trying to play a joke upon his metaphysical countrymen in order to drive home to them the futility of metaphysics. But one thing is certain that the whole idea of *karma* is central to his conception of self, and *karma* is to be understood only in terms of morality.

(6) A code of morality is a *sine qua non* for every society. No society can subsist without it. From this standpoint it would be foolish to deny to Hindu society the credit for a high code of morality. Yet in a sense it would not be incorrect to say that Hinduism does not allot to morality the same high place that theistic religions like Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam do. In the Vedantic schools the Hindu love of metaphysics is so dominant that morality as such finds a secondary place. It is forced to yield in importance sometimes to *jñāna* (knowledge), and sometimes to *bhakti* (prayer and devotion) and sometimes to *karma* in the sense of religious ritual. No student of Hindu culture can be blind to this fact. The Advaitin looks upon morality as phenomenal, as belonging to the world of *māyā* (appearance almost in the sense of illusion), and to the *jñānī*, who has attained perfection through knowledge, the moral distinctions between the good and evil come to be transcended. Hence the claim that some knaves do not hesitate to put forth that as they have attained *jñāna* or knowledge, they are above good and evil, which in plain language implies that they can literally take moral holidays, and can do whatever evil they like. It is, of course, a travesty of Advaita ethics, but as a bare fact it cannot be denied. Similarly, the Bhakti doctrine has often ended in erotic excesses, which are justified on the ground that the love of God purifies all relationships. This too

<sup>1</sup> *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. i, p. xxi.

may be a travesty, but as a bare fact of Hindu life it cannot be denied. Nor can it be denied that so ritualistic a religion as Hinduism revels in ceremonies and measures the orthodoxy of a man in terms of the ceremonies he performs, not in terms of the good he does. Recently a case came to my notice where a man punctiliously has his cold-water bath early in the morning at four o'clock, spends two to three hours on religious ceremonies, and begins his worldly duties by beating his wife. He has now driven her away and married another without the slightest compunction. And he certainly passes for a pious man. This too may be a travesty of genuine morality, but unfortunately it is not uncommon. The *Bhagavadgītā* is usually regarded as the greatest book on Hindu Ethics, and yet it is much more metaphysical than ethical. The *Dharma Śāstras* are supposed to be moral treatises, and yet it is notorious that they are more legal codes than systems of pure morality.

It is necessary to mention all this, for only in the light of it can we be in a position to appreciate the real revolution sought to be effected by Buddha. The core of his philosophy is to be found in his sublime ethics revolving round the love of man, and in this respect he is perhaps the only great Indian teacher who has exalted morality above everything else. His example has indeed been followed by theistic teachers like Kabir and Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Gandhiji, all theists, but they can hardly be said to have had the same influence on the moral and religious life of the world that Buddha had.

As Buddha recognized no god, there is no room for ritualism in his ethics. His famous insistence on the Middle Path is a glorification of the golden mean in life. It expresses itself negatively in the five precepts: not to kill, not to steal, not to be unchaste, not to lie, and not to drink intoxicants. Positively it expresses itself in the Noble Eightfold Path, covering rightness in views, aspiration, speech, behaviour, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and concentration.

Attempts have been made indeed to show that his ethics is centred in his view of Nirvana, and that it is pessimistic in its endeavour to annihilate all craving. But these are attempts inspired by metaphysical motives. All such attempts, however, are doomed to failure, for nothing can tarnish the purity of Buddha's moral teaching. If we take away this teaching there remains really nothing worth treasuring in him. It is only in the light of his ethical teaching that we can ever hope to understand the abstruse portions of his psychology or of his metaphysics or whatever can be called metaphysics in his thought. Practically all the Jātaka stories seek to establish some moral principle. There is, for example, the parable of the quails and the fowler to show how the fowler was foiled in his work by the united cunning of the quails, but when they began to quarrel among themselves, the fowler has his chance and he could net them easily.



## PHILOSOPHY

There is the story of how Dīghāvu reaped wealth and position by showing love to his enemy. And so it goes on birth after birth of the future Buddha, the very quintessence of morality. In spite of the intrinsic greatness of his teaching, for two centuries the Buddhists continued an obscure sect till the great Asoka felt its charm and made it a world movement. Asoka's edicts all go to show that what he valued most in Buddha's teaching was his emphasis on moral principles. The highest morality must always imply a love for others. That Buddha's ethics was not self-centred is abundantly proved by his historic life, even if we discard the tales of his previous births as mythological. He declared that he aimed at enlightenment not for his own sake but that he might enlighten others. The catholicity of his outlook has been equalled perhaps by Christ, but not surpassed by anyone. If there are a few passages here and there which point to the need of rooting out desires, let us not forget passages where he shows how "with the aid of craving does one eliminate craving." If Buddha taught an indiscriminate elimination of all desires, he should be held up as a dreamer ignorant of what life means or what morality means. But he was nothing of a mere dreamer. He knew that man does not and cannot live for himself. A man's love for his fellow-beings is the most redeeming feature of human life, and no teacher can claim to have probed the depths of humanity, who has not made this truth part and parcel of his own life and teaching. Buddha was among the earliest teachers of mankind to have mastered this truth, and in this sphere he reigns supreme with but few peers. There is no metaphysics about it, and if there is, it is possible to dissociate it for the purpose of appealing to the masses. The tone of high ethics that marked Buddha can be illustrated by nothing better than by his gentle, yet cutting, retort to the Brahmin that had come to abuse him.

BUDDHA: "When thou receivest visits from friends and colleagues, dost thou make food ready for them?"

BRAHMIN: "Yes, Master Gotama, sometimes I do."

BUDDHA: "But if they do not accept thy hospitality, whose do those things become?"

BRAHMIN: "If they do not accept them, those things are for us."

BUDDHA: "Even so, Brahmin. That wherewith thou revilest us, who revile not, wherewith thou scoldest us, who scold not, abusest us, who abuse not, that we accept not at thy hands. 'Tis for thee only, O Brahmin, only for thee."<sup>1</sup>

The atmosphere of good will and love that we find for all in the ethics of Buddha is something that we miss in the Hindu tales of the wrath of gods and cursing rishis, and the perpetual degradation of those people who had been reduced by the haughty Aryans to the

<sup>1</sup> Pratt's *Pilgrimage of Buddhism*, p. 11 footnote.

## BUDDHA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE

status of polluting Shūdras and Panchamas. This was the most revolutionary part of Buddha's teaching. If it had been accepted in its totality, India could have been a new country. But it was not to be, and India is what she is. Caste still rules. It has affected all who have come into touch with Hindus. Its unholy touch has corrupted every community in India, the Christians and the Muslims and the Zoroastrians not excepted.

(7) It has been a frequent charge against Buddhism that it over-emphasizes sorrow and is therefore through and through pessimistic. That it is fully alive to the existence of sorrow and suffering cannot be gainsaid. Whether therefore it should be called pessimistic is an open question. In this respect it challenges comparison with Christianity. The religion of Christ too, at least as preached by missionaries, is acutely charged with a sense of sin, but Christ is presented as showing a way out of it, and if thereby Christianity can escape the charge of pessimism, the same logic must apply to Buddha, and he too must be absolved from the charge of pessimism, for he too shows the way out of the misery that is life. And here we come face to face with the most intriguing concept in Buddha: *Nirvāna*. If sorrow is the result of our attachments, and attachments lead to *karma* and *karma* leads to rebirths, it is surely a vicious circle to build up *karma* which can only end in rebirths. It is an easy temptation therefore to say that rebirths can end only with the cessation of *karma*, and therefore it is logical to put an end to *karma*—and the result would be *Nirvāna*. This easy path of interpretation has been followed and it has been argued that since life is evil, no-life or death must be good, and therefore cessation of life with no possibility of rebirth must be good, and this is what *Nirvāna* is made to mean: just nothingness, total extinction. If this interpretation is correct it exposes Buddha to a double criticism: (i) If the supreme end of life is no-life, or death without rebirth, what is the worth of morality? It may at best alleviate sorrow, it cannot extinguish it and therefore it only leads to a mere protraction of life and therefore of sorrow. If therefore in spite of this Buddha exhorts people to follow the Noble Eightfold Path, he is recommending a cure which protracts the disease of sorrow instead of curing it. (ii) If the end of life is nothingness, mere extinction, Buddhism must be dismissed as an essentially negative creed. How can anyone be content with the contemplation of so negative an end?

These two criticisms are mutually destructive, but each of them taken by itself has some point in it. It is doubtful if any person who sees any good in life will ever be content with the total annihilation of it. If life is partly evil, our moral practices should rid it of evil and make life worth living. The possibility of this negatives the fundamental assumption that life is wholly evil. Could so great a

## PHILOSOPHY

teacher as Buddha have been guilty of so palpable a contradiction? The only solution of this impasse is to retrace our steps and restate the problem in its proper perspective. Both quantitatively and qualitatively Buddha's teaching is so charged with morality that we must make it the basic point in our examination of his philosophy. If we are exhorted to be moral, surely it must be for the good of mankind. It certainly makes life worth living, and gives a certain positive content to it, and to that extent it cannot all be *duḥkha*: sorrow and suffering. If morality implies an assertion of life, the end of morality cannot be something negative; it must be positive, and since Nirvāna is promised as the fruition of good life, Nirvāna itself must be positive, and not negative. It cannot be so negative as the complete extinction of life. This is just the conclusion which forces itself on a dispassionate student of Buddha's teaching. He himself has said: "The destruction of greed, the destruction of hate, the destruction of illusion—this, O friend, is what is called *Nibbāna*."<sup>1</sup> The Buddhist formulation of Nirvāna emphasizes the consciousness that "birth is at an end, that the higher life has been fulfilled, that all that should be done has been done, and that after this present life there will be no more becoming." So Nirvāna does imply extinction, not of life, but of lust, ill-will, ignorance, anger, fear, and everything that makes life a burden. He who has attained this state is an *Arahant*, he has attained *Nirvāna*. The *Arahant* may go to heaven or not, that is a matter of very secondary importance, if of any importance at all. Mrs. Rhys Davids, one of the most outstanding European scholars in the field of Buddhism, analyses the state of Nirvāna and finds it involves mental enlightenment, mastery of self and equanimity of mind. The Upanishadic *Shānti* (peace) and *Ananda* (bliss) are there. If it involves so many positive qualities, it cannot be mere nothingness. It is the consciousness of life's work done well and it carries its own reward. It sees the end of the cycle of births and deaths, and this has been the religious quest of India through the ages. It bears a likeness to the Advaitic conception of *Jīvan-mukti*, emancipation even in this life. Perhaps the Upanishadic *Moksha* means nothing more than Buddha's *Nirvāna*, but with this difference: it is achieved not as mere *jñāna* with morality as an adjunct, but through the hard toil of a moral life, through the forgetting of one's self in the sorrows and tribulations of others. "Anyone imbued with this spirit can take up the burden of a Bodhisattva, face life and death again and again to be ever at the side of those that need his help. That is the lesson taught us by the *Jātaka* stories: Buddha was the willing bearer of the world's sorrows and postponed his Buddhahood for countless ages. Here in this concept of Nirvāna we touch the high watermark of Buddha's teaching.

<sup>1</sup> *Nibbāna* is the Pāli form of Sanskrit *Nirvāna*.

## BUDDHA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE

(8) Buddha discovered the secret of life. In fact he was hunting for it to enlighten others. He must spread the knowledge he had gained, and he did spread it during his life. But what would happen after his death? His discovery must not die with himself or even with the death of his immediate disciples. He had to found an organization that could carry on his work and carry his gospel to the four corners of the earth. And so he issued his appeal:

"Fare ye forth, brethren, on the mission that is for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, to take compassion on the world, to work profit and good and happiness to gods and men. Go no two of you the same way.<sup>1</sup> Teach ye the truth lovely in its origin, lovely in its progress, lovely in its consummation. Both in the spirit and the letter proclaim ye the higher life in all its fullness, in all its purity. Beings there are whose eyes are dimmed with dust, perishing because they bear not the truth."

If this was the settled intention of Buddha, he had to take steps to carry it out, and the idea of the *Saṅgha* was the result. That the *Saṅgha* as an organization of the Buddhists was actually brought into existence and that it did excellent work in the early history of Buddhism is all a matter of history. Its essential aim was to spread the doctrine, and this necessitated missions going to places far and near. This sort of life could be followed only by those who had no encumbrances in the form of wives and children. In other words, celibacy was inevitable. It was also logical that they should eschew all possible incentives to sexual life, e.g. dancing, singing, attending theatrical and similar performances. They had to avoid the use of garlands, scents and ornaments, comfortable beds and money, for the lure of money would lead to corruption. That the life of the monks was ascetic in the sense of rigorous discipline cannot be denied. That such a life had a purpose and that purpose was the spread of the gospel of morality and Nirvāna among the people at large is equally certain. That it was to serve as a refuge from the world and foster a life of laziness and dependence, was quite against the grain of Buddha, and if in later ages the *Saṅgha* did degenerate into such a gathering of idlers and social parasites, it could only be regarded as a most unfortunate perversion of Buddha's teaching. That Buddha was against the idea of beggary is beautifully illustrated in his parable which goes to show how a beggar is never loved by anyone.<sup>2</sup> It is shown equally by his own life of strenuous work: preaching and helping all and sundry. None was too low or abandoned for him, for,

<sup>1</sup> This passage is interesting from the comparative-religion point of view as illustrating the opposite of Christ's practice as mentioned at Mark vi. 7: "He began to send them forth by two and two."—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Burlingame's *Buddhist Parables*, p. 68.

## PHILOSOPHY

like Christ, he too saw that no one is so abandoned that he or she could not be reclaimed. This attitude, too, is in striking contrast to the haughty attitude of orthodox Hindus, the "holiest" of whom dread to lose their "holiness" through the touch of the impure, whereas genuinely holy people like Buddha and Christ were conscious of the redeeming power that they possessed whereby their touch could sanctify even sinners.

(9) The place of women in the *Saṅgha* constitutes an interesting chapter in the history of Buddhism. Buddha's own attitude to women was in marked contrast to the orthodox Hindu attitude. Hindu religion for good or for evil fully recognizes the feminine element in religion. No god is complete without his wife as his *śakti* (power) and is most easily approachable through her. Buddha knew no god and therefore the need to recognize his spouse did not arise at all. But it could not be denied that Buddha was always a little suspicious of women. His advice to Ānanda as to how he should avoid women amply bears this out, and he justifies his attitude thus:

"Women are soon angered, Ānanda; women are full of passion, Ānanda; women are envious, Ānanda; women are stupid, Ānanda. That is the reason, Ānanda, that the cause, why women have no place in public assemblies, do not carry on a business; and do not earn their living by any profession."<sup>1</sup>

Ānanda was more chivalrous in his attitude towards women and it was only under his pressure that Buddha agreed to organize a *Saṅgha* for women, but not without the tragic premonition that their inclusion would hasten the decay of the religion by a good five hundred years, a premonition which was duly fulfilled, for when the *Saṅghas* became the haunts of laziness, the devil gave ample opportunities to the monks and nuns to make their celibacy a cruel farce.

But in spite of his low opinion of women, Buddha was always just and kind to them. He would befriend even a harlot and saw no wrong in accepting a prostitute's invitation to dinner. For he had the consciousness of his mission, and he could not keep out anyone from his mission without stultifying his own teaching. He did not deny the possibility of a woman rising above the infirmities of her sex and showing her worthiness to benefit through his teaching. Here again he showed the excellence of the Middle Path, for he neither deified woman as some Hindu cults have done, nor did he debase her and exploit her as so many of the later Dharma Sastras tended to do, and as modern Hindu Law has succeeded in perpetuating her inferiority.

(10) Buddha's treatment of caste has given rise to conflicting opinions. Sir Charles Eliot permits himself to make a surprising

<sup>1</sup> Quoted on p. 162 in Coomarswamy's *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism*.

# BUDDHA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE

statement: "And though he (Buddha) denied that the Brahmins were superior by birth to others, he did not preach against caste, partly because it then existed in a rudimentary form."<sup>1</sup> This is a double-edged argument, for if in Buddha's time caste had not developed its evil tendencies, there was indeed no reason why he should raise his voice against it, but it does not follow that he believed in, or countenanced, caste. In fact the whole tendency of his teaching, explicitly and implicitly, militated against caste. It was his glory to say: "As in the ocean all the great rivers lose their name and being, so in my doctrine all the castes merge."<sup>2</sup> In a similar strain he once said: "My doctrine is like the sky. There is room for all without exception: men, women, boys and girls, poor and rich." In the *Dhammapāda* he gives an ethical interpretation of the Brahmin in the same strain as Yuddhiṣṭhira in the *Mahābhārata*:

"He who is thoughtful, blameless, settled, dutiful, without passions, and who has attained the highest end, him I call indeed a Brāhmana. . . .

Him I call a Brāhmana who does not offend by body, word or thought, and is controlled on these three points.

A man does not become a Brāhmana by his plaited hair, by his family or by birth; in whom there is truth and righteousness, he is blessed, he is a Brāhmana.

What is the use of plaited hair, O fool! What of the raiment of goat-skins? Within thee there is ravaging, but the outside thou makest clean.

I do not call a man a Brāhmana because of his origin or of his mother. He is indeed arrogant and he is wealthy. But the poor who is free from all attachments, him I call indeed a Brāhmana."<sup>3</sup>

In the *Amagandha Sutta* of the *Sutta Nipāta* it is stated that defilement does not come from eating this or that, prepared or given by this or that person, but from evil deeds and words and thoughts.

In the face of such explicit passages it would be futile to argue that Buddha countenanced caste in the sense in which it has become a fetish with the orthodox Hindus during the last thousand years and more. Rhys Davids in his *Introduction to the Ambaṭṭha Sutta* points out how Buddha's Order contained people of all castes: Upālī was a barber, Sunīta was of a low tribe, Sati belonged to the fisherfolk, Nanda was a cowherd, and the list could be multiplied. Thus it is clear that Buddha was the first rebel against the tyranny

<sup>1</sup> *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. i, p. xxii.

<sup>2</sup> *Dahlke's Buddhist Essays*, p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> *Dhammapāda*, translated by Max Müller, pp. 62-3.

## PHILOSOPHY

of caste, even though in his time caste was much more fluid than it has since become. If his message of human equality had taken root in the Indian soil, Indian history might have been a record of great patriotic victories instead of defeats at the hands of every foreigner who has tried his luck at gathering the gold of India. The ugly truth has to be accepted that the whole organization of the Hindu society has been built up on the unabashed recognition of the aristocratic principle. Every Hindu must belong to a caste, not of his choosing, but the one in which he happens to be born. Every caste except of course the highest, the Brahmins, admits the superiority of some other caste, but it as scrupulously regards itself as superior to some other caste, an excellent exemplification of the simultaneous working of the superiority and inferiority complexes, so much so that even the most despised outcastes have developed their own aristocracy in the form of the Right Hand people and the Left Hand people, each priding itself on its own superiority. Buddhism was far too democratic for such a society. Whatever the precept and the example of Buddha himself his followers failed to eschew caste completely, and in the subsequent centuries caste corroded the Buddhist society as much as it has succeeded in corroding the life of the Christian Churches in recent times; even Islam, the most democratic religion, has allowed itself to be influenced by caste so far at least as Islam in India is concerned. This perhaps explains the paradox that Buddhism found a more congenial soil wherein to flourish in China and Japan than in aristocratic India.

### II

It is a fascinating historical problem to find out why Buddhism was ultimately driven out of India. One or the other of three reasons has usually been assigned for this, and it would be interesting to examine the cogency of each of them.

(1) The Rev. Anagārika Dharmapāla of the Mahābodhi Society does not hesitate to lay the chief blame at the door of Muslim fanaticism and writes categorically: "In the eleventh century Buddhism found its dread foe in Baktiar Khilji, the great Vandal, who destroyed the libraries of Nalanda and Odantapuri." Sir Charles Eliot is more cautious in his judgment: "There is thus every reason to suppose that in the twelfth century Buddhism still flourished in Bihar, that its clergy numbered several thousands and its learning was held in esteem. The blow which destroyed its power was struck by a Moham-medan invasion in 1193. In that year, Ikhtiyar-ud-Din Muhammad, a general of Kutb-ud-Din, invaded Bihar with a band of only two hundred men and with amazing audacity seized the capital, which,

<sup>1</sup> *The Life and Teachings of Buddha* (G. A. Natesan & Co.), p. 7.

## BUDDHA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE

consisting chiefly of palaces and monasteries, collapsed without a blow. The monks were massacred to a man."<sup>1</sup> But he denies that the Muslim conqueror had any special animus against Buddhism, and goes on to explain why Buddhism did suffer so much: "But whereas Hinduism was spread over the country, Buddhism was concentrated in the great monasteries and when these were destroyed there remained nothing outside them capable of withstanding either the violence of the Moslems or the assimilative influence of the Brahmins. Hence Buddhism suffered far more from these invasions than Hinduism."<sup>2</sup> This is palpably as bad as it could have been, but he refuses to assert that persecution was the main cause of the decadence of Buddhism, and does not look upon it even as "very important among the accessory causes."<sup>3</sup> He diagnoses the case admirably when he says about Buddhism that "when its temples and monasteries were demolished it did not live on in the hearts of the people, as did Hinduism with all its faults."<sup>4</sup>

Muslim fanaticism in open defiance of the noble teachings of the Prophet Mahomed has indeed been a recurrent feature of Muslim conquests in all lands. But nowhere has it succeeded in totally rooting out rival religions of a really high order. In Iran Zoroastrianism has persisted right down till the present day, and this in spite of frequent persecutions and endless religious and political disabilities. In India, too, Hinduism after centuries of Muslim rule still continues the dominant religion. Persecution has often had in human history exactly the opposite effect of fanning the smouldering embers of some ancient or new faith. The history of early Christianity in the Roman Empire abundantly proves this and so does the history of Sikhism in India.

On the whole we have to reject categorically the theory of Muslim persecution as the cause of the Buddhist exile from India.

(2) A far more satisfactory explanation of the decay of Buddhism in India is to be found in the steady deterioration of the Buddhist morals and morale. It is very sad to reflect that this process set in almost immediately after the death of Buddha, when his ashes and bones were distributed among the faithful, and over each of them arose a stupa, magnificent from the standpoint of archaeology, but ruinous from the standpoint of the life-work of Buddha himself. He had foreseen the decay of his teaching through ceremonialism, as every other religion too has decayed through the cunning machinations of unscrupulous priests. Even the Buddhist monks failed to live up to the ideal laid down by their Master. They were originally brought into being as missionaries, but as the piety of the laity brought them magnificent viharas to live in and plenty of food, they

<sup>1</sup> *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. ii, pp. 112-13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120.



## PHILOSOPHY

degenerated into idlers. Sir Charles Eliot points out how Buddhism was affected even by the eroticism of Tantric Śaktism. As the worship of the Bodhisattva Avalokita came more and more into vogue, the worship of *Tārā* as female deity also became fashionable. "The Buddha or Bodhisattva is represented as enjoying nirvāna because he is united to his spouse. . . . The devotee may imagine that he enters into *Tārā* as the embryo and is born of her as a Buddha. More often the argument is that since the bliss of the Buddha consists in union with *Tārā*, nirvāna can be obtained by sexual union here and we find many of the Tantric wizards represented as accompanied by female companions. The adept should avoid all action, but he is beyond good and evil and the dangerous doctrine that he can do evil with impunity, which the more respectable sects repudiate, is expressly taught."<sup>1</sup>

One can see in this a parallel to the history of the Roman Catholic Church in medieval Europe, but with a characteristic difference. The immorality of the popes and monks in Europe produced a Wycliffe and a Luther. There was an open revolt which was the means of reasserting the purity of Christian morals. The Protestant Reformation incited a Counter-Reformation within the Catholic Church itself, and this partly accounts for the interesting fact that even to-day the Roman Church is the most compact and the most well-organized religious organization in the whole world, and it claims the largest number of followers within Christendom itself.

Buddhism failed to produce a Luther, though it did not fail to produce a host of metaphysicians. Buddhism lived true to the type of the Hindu philosopher, and like Hinduism it lost its moral vigour. Subtleties in verbal logic came to be the order of the day and the relative importance of morality and metaphysics came to be reversed in the Buddhism of the Buddhists as distinguished from the Buddhism of the Buddha himself. This double lapse into barren metaphysics and dangerous religious ritualism undoubtedly offers a plausible explanation for the decay of Buddhism, but not for its total disappearance from India. After all the history of every religion shows an almost inevitable decay sooner or later, for the heights of the prophets cannot be maintained by an organized or hereditary priesthood for whom religion has become a profession, and not a mission. But such a decay does not imply a total eradication, and therefore in the history of Indian Buddhism its ultimate extinction has to find some other explanation.

(3) It has been suggested that Buddhism performed its historic mission but its atheism was not based upon a sound metaphysics, and therefore as soon as a great philosophic genius like Śāṅkara arose, the best in Buddha's teaching was absorbed by him and all its

<sup>1</sup> Sir Charles Eliot's *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. ii, p. 123.

angularities rounded off into a smooth, logically perfect, metaphysics, which the world has come to know as Advaita Vedānta. Śāṅkara himself has been sarcastically described by his opponents as Prac-hanna<sup>1</sup>-Buddha, and behind this sarcasm lies a great amount of truth. Logically Śāṅkara was as much a confirmed agnostic as Buddha himself, but he had the Hindu astuteness to conceal it from the masses under the guise of countenancing every practice as suited to the ill-developed brain capacity of different individuals. It has been said of a follower of Śāṅkara to-day that he confirms each man in his stupidity. The expression is not inapt in the case of Śāṅkara himself, and that is why we find that while Śāṅkara's brilliant intellect helped to rout the Buddhist metaphysics, and succeeded in giving a fillip to the worship of Shiva and the observances of caste practices, he failed to give his generation that moral vigour which was the supreme service of Buddha to his generation.

It is a common popular idea that Śāṅkara drove Buddhism out of India. But it would be far truer to say that Śāṅkara freely adopted what he liked from the armoury of Buddha, including *ahiṃsā* (non-violence) and vegetarianism. And so, in a sense, Buddhism still lives in India, though in a new garb, but only at the cost of its soul; for Advaita, as Neo-Buddhism, failed to tackle the problem of caste and untouchability, or to weld together the teeming castes of India, though Śāṅkara gave a certain semblance of religious unity to Hinduism by establishing his Mutts in the four corners of India. That Śāṅkara the agnostic should have done this is as much a paradox of history as the extinction of Buddhism in India. Śāṅkara's triumph was indeed at the expense of Buddhism, but it would be bad history to credit Śāṅkara alone with the conquest of Buddhism. He was but a mirror of India's soul. He had the genius to grasp the psychology of the ignorant masses and adapted himself to their needs by trotting out the *paramārthika*<sup>2</sup> and the *vyavahārika*<sup>3</sup> like a practised dialectician to suit the nature of differing audiences. It is a supreme irony in India that in succeeding centuries right down till our own times Śāṅkara has been revered and worshipped as a man of religion, while the keen logic of his thought effectually exposed the pretensions of *Īśvara*<sup>4</sup> as nothing more than a fragment of the world of *māyā*.<sup>5</sup>

(4) The reasons dealt with above are generally advanced to explain the disappearance of Buddhism from India, but we have tried to show that none of them is completely satisfactory. The real reason lies much deeper and is really to be found in the psychology of the Hindus. We have tried to show in the first part of this essay how every important teaching of Buddha was through and through

<sup>1</sup> Concealed

<sup>2</sup> Relating to the world.

<sup>3</sup> Relating to the ultimate soul.

<sup>4</sup> Personal God.

<sup>5</sup> Appearance.

## PHILOSOPHY

revolutionary and more or less repugnant to the Hindu mind. The extreme emphasis on pure morality without its roots in the divinity of gods failed to make a lasting appeal, and that is why the Buddhists deified him, and the Hindus made him an avatar<sup>†</sup> of Vishnu and laid the flattering unction to their soul that thereby they had done all for Buddha that they could be reasonably expected to do. Similarly in the matter of caste neither the teaching nor the example of Buddha had any appreciable effect. If it be true, as asserted by some, that in his time caste had not developed into a rigid institution, it is all the more distressing that even its tendency to rigidity failed to be checked. As a matter of mere history we cannot but come to the conclusion, disappointing though it be, that Buddhism as Buddha conceived it almost died with Buddha, and the Buddhism that lived a chequered career in India for a millennium and a half was not so much a way of life as a creed. As a force against the traditional Hinduism it had to be itself transformed into metaphysics or religion: just the two things that Buddha was most suspicious about and did his best to avoid.

But if Buddha failed in India he succeeded in China, for China with her simple and direct emphasis on morality and her freedom from the subtleties of metaphysics offered a genial soil for the growth of Buddhism. The Chinaman is a hard-headed, hard-working, practical man, devoted to his good earth and rooted in his soil. He knows no artificial divisions of society. The Chinese society is essentially democratic. In the worst days of imperial absolutism entrance to public services was controlled through a rigorous system of public examinations. Ability, not birth, opened the gates of public service. In a country so fond of children as China ascetic celibacy could hardly be expected to flourish. But, after all, even Buddha had aimed not at producing recluses, but active missionaries free from the trammels of family life. He did not want them to be self-centred, self-mortifying ascetics. A monk after Buddha's pattern required just a certain amount of discipline to heighten his moral energy, and the practical Chinaman could take up the role of a Buddhist monk.

Chinese Buddhism has deviated from the teaching of Buddha only in one respect predominantly, and that is in the direction of theism. But even this has been done so beautifully and so logically that Buddhist theism in China stands self-justified. In one of his last discourses to his favourite follower, Ānanda, Buddha related how on a previous occasion he had resisted the temptation to enter into Nirvāna, and narrated his reply to Māra:

"I shall not go into Nirvāna, thou evil one, before I have monks as hearers, wise, disciplined, experienced, well-informed, who

† Rebirth.

## BUDDHA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE

possess the doctrine of salvation, who have the calm corresponding to the doctrine of salvation; not until these themselves, after commencing their teaching office, impart, proclaim, teach, determine, explain, expound, correct; not until they proclaim the doctrine of salvation with tokens of wonder, after having suppressed the protests of others which can be suppressed by the aid of the doctrine of salvation. . . .

I shall not go into Nirvāna, thou evil one, until this irreproachable conduct of mine has succeeded and bloomed widespread, known to many and richly multiplied, so that it has been beautifully manifested to men."<sup>1</sup>

The development of the doctrine of the Bodhisattva is perfectly consistent with the spirit of this passage, though not with the teaching of Buddha as the gospel of self-help. In one of the Mahāyāna books we come across the following resolve and vow of the Bodhisattva to save all beings:

"I take upon myself the burden of all sufferings, I am resolved to do so, to bear them. I turn not back, I do not flee, I quake not, neither do I tremble. I fear not, I yield not, nor do I hesitate. And why? Because I must take upon me the burden of all beings. It is not my free will. The deliverance of all beings is my solemn vow; all beings will have to be delivered by me. By me must the whole world of living creatures be delivered. From the wilderness of birth, from the wilderness of age, from the wilderness of sickness, from the wilderness of death, from the wilderness of all kinds of misfortune, from the wilderness of the evil forms of existence, from the wilderness of the entire circulation of rebirths, from the wilderness of all heresies, from the wilderness of the loss of the good religion, from the wilderness arising out of uncertainty, from all these wildernesses I must save all beings. . . .

I work for the establishment of the incomparable kingdom of knowledge for all beings. I take pains not only for my own redemption. For all these beings must be brought by me from the river of Samsāra (earthly existence) in the boat of thought to omniscience. From the great abyss I must raise them, from all calamities I must deliver them, I must lead them out from the river of Samsāra. I must take upon myself the whole burden of the sufferings of all beings. As far as I am able, I will taste all the sufferings of all the evil forms of existence, as they are borne in all parts of the world. And no being must be deceived by me as to the root of the good. I have resolved to live in every single evil form of existence for countless millions of ages. And as in one evil form of existence, so there is reason for me to deliver all beings in all the evil forms of

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Söderblom's *The Living God*, p. 145.

## PHILOSOPHY

existence without exception in whatever part of the world they occur. And why? It is surely better that I alone suffer than that all beings should come to the places of evil existence."<sup>1</sup>

It would be difficult to hunt for a more exalted passage than this one, and if any being deserves to be deified, it is surely such a Bodhi-sattva. No wonder that this conception, though of Indian origin, found a more congenial soil for its acceptance and development in China. If such a view has detracted from the manliness of self-help, it has at least tended to give a broad catholic basis and held out a hope to all that they need not despair, and in China through the ages has gone up the cry "Reverently and confidently I take refuge in Amitābha."

### III

Western critics of Indian life and thought are fond of dwelling on the tone of pessimism they find in India. Hindu thinkers resent this charge and fondly dwell on the joyousness of the Rigvedic hymns and the serenity of the Upanishadic speculations. If they plead guilty to the charge of pessimism at all they trace it to the influence of Buddha almost as an alien force in the history of Hindu culture. For the millions of Hindu masses the antics and loves of Krishna have had a far greater fascination than the sombre life of Buddha, who gave up power to go about with the beggar's howl. Even the legendary myths of Shiva and Pārvatī have a sway over the Hindu mind which the gentle love of Yaśodhara for Buddha has never had. As in metaphysics, so in popular religion in India, Buddha and his message failed to impress themselves. That is the story of the past. Is the future likely to tell a different tale?

What really are the chances of a Buddhist revival in the India of to-day? The establishment of the Mahābodhi Society in Calcutta, the consecration of the beautiful new temple at Sarnath, and the attempts persistently made in recent years by the Buddhists to regain possession of the temple at Gayā, all undoubtedly bear witness to a revival of interest in Buddhism in India. Whether all this will bear fruit on any vast scale remains to be seen. The psychology of the people, which has been so markedly anti-Buddhistic, has not changed materially. But modern conditions have affected at least the life of the educated sections to an appreciable extent. The political situation has created a sympathy for the untouchables among the political-minded Hindus, as neither ethics nor religion ever succeeded in doing in the past. Western education has certainly and profoundly affected the religious outlook of the educated youth, whether in the direction of an honest agnosticism or of a purified

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Soderblom's *The Living God*, pp. 151-2.

## BUDDHA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE

monotheism. Pure theism is not having an unchallenged existence in India any more than in Europe or America, and if spiritual values are not to disappear under the pressure of materialistic thought, some substitute must be found which could mitigate the effects of a naked materialism, and such a substitute may reasonably be found in Buddhism. Sixty millions of untouchables labelled as Buddhists may not solve all our political problems. But if they could be raised to that level of education where they could see in Buddha a great moral uplifter, and not a mere dispenser of ready-made redemption, we can have a new society in India in which the oppressed of yesterday can command recognition and respect of the oppressors themselves. If Buddhism can transform the lives of untouchables it is bound to have a most healthy reaction on all sections of Indian society. Perhaps even the caste-ridden Hinduism may succeed in capturing the moral vigour of Buddha, and then the mission of Buddha will have been truly fulfilled, whether his image is worshipped or not in a million temples. Perhaps after twenty-five centuries of political humiliations and the crudities of caste, and soul-killing superstitions and ignorance, Indians may yet learn that life is much more than religious ceremonials and ideas of conventional purity. If there be any truth in the idea that a people's life in the last resort is governed only by their philosophic outlook, there can be hope for India only when every Hindu can extend a hand of fellowship to every other Hindu, be he a Brahmin or an untouchable, and when every Indian can see a brother in every other Indian, whether he be from the North or the South. Buddha showed the way. It is for the Indians to accept the way.

## WHITEHEAD'S PHILOSOPHY: THE WORLD AS PROCESS<sup>\*</sup>

SYDNEY E. HOOPER, M.A.

THIS paper will endeavour to present an outline of the Organic Philosophy associated with the name of Whitehead. Whitehead resembles Spinoza and Leibniz in that he is a philosopher who has tried to construct a world-outlook that will do justice to science and to the other aspects of life and knowledge. Moreover, just as in his day Leibniz was an eminent mathematician and scientist, so Whitehead in our day enjoys the same distinction. But Whitehead's philosophy differs both from that of Spinoza and from that of Leibniz. Spinoza based his philosophy upon the monistic substance, of which the actual events in the world are the inferior modes. Whitehead bases his philosophy upon the actual events themselves and derives the solidarity of the world as a whole from their mutual interplay. Thus the organic philosophy is pluralistic in contrast with Spinoza's monism. In comparing Whitehead's philosophy with that of Leibniz, we find that they agree in both being pluralistic, but they differ in the emphasis placed upon the notion of mentality. Leibniz's monads are best conceived as generalizations of the notion of mentality, and the conception of physical bodies only enters into his philosophy subordinately and derivatively. Whitehead, however, in his philosophy of organism endeavours to hold the balance between the physical and mental more evenly, and thus does justice to both aspects of reality.

The exposition of Whitehead's philosophy given in this paper is derived for the most part from the four books, *Concept of Nature*, *Science and the Modern World*, *Process and Reality*, and *Adventures of Ideas*.

The fundamental ideas of the organic philosophy are "Creativity," "Actual Entity," "Eternal Objects" and "God." At the outset I wish to emphasize the importance of a clear understanding that the four ideas to be discussed presuppose each other, so that in isolation they are meaningless. That is to say, the fundamental notions of the organic philosophy are not capable of abstraction from each other. This does not mean that the separate ideas are definable in terms of each other; it means that what is *indefinable* in any one of the ideas cannot be abstracted from its relevance to the other ideas. The pre-supposition of the scheme of thought at the base of the organic philosophy is that no entity can be conceived in complete

<sup>\*</sup> Series, *Contemporary World-Outlooks* (IV).

abstraction from the system of the universe as a whole. Consequently the fundamental ideas employed in the description of the universe pre-suppose each other. It will be observed that in this scheme of ideas, the "substance-quality" concept is avoided, being replaced by the description of the world as dynamic process. I will first consider the notion of "creativity."

### *Creativity*

In introducing the notion of "Creativity," the author of the organic philosophy reminds us that in all philosophical theory there is an ultimate which is only capable of characterization through its *embodiment*, and apart from these embodiments is devoid of actuality. That is to say, there is no pure or "eminent" activity (as some theologians have thought), but only activity embodied in the events of the world. In the organic philosophy this ultimate is termed "Creativity." Later on we shall learn that the ultimate has a primordial non-temporal character which is termed "God" and that in respect of the individual facts or "creatures" of nature, defined by certain forms, Creativity is the ultimate behind all forms and is itself inexplicable by forms.

The Organic Philosophy at the outset emphasizes a fundamental principle of the universe, namely, that it is of the innermost nature of things for the "many" to enter into complex unity. (We find, for example, that atoms are components of molecules, and that separate cells are components of organic bodies.) On the abstract level of philosophic thought, the "many" are the universe regarded as a multiplicity of discrete things, and it lies in the nature of these many things to come together to form a new sort of unity. "Creativity" is the ultimate principle by which the many discrete things, which are the universe disjunctively, become through a process of synthesis, a new individual actual entity which is the universe conjunctively. The phrase "the universe conjunctively" means that the novel actual entity, which creativity has brought into being, unifies all the separate entities of the universe into a "togetherness" from its own perspective or point of view. It is to be noted that, by unifying the many separate entities of the universe into a new creature, creativity produces a novel actual entity different from any of the entities which it unifies. That is to say, by the function of creativity the many discrete entities of the universe are synthesized into a new individual, and are therefore increased by one. Whitehead expresses this "growth" of the universe in these words: "the novel entity or synthetic unity, is at once the togetherness of the many which it finds, and also 'one' among the disjunctive many which it leaves."<sup>1</sup> Creativity thus

<sup>1</sup> *Process and Reality*, p. 29.



discloses itself as the principle of novelty responsible for the creative advance of nature.

Perhaps the most vivid way of conceiving the notion of "Creativity" is to think of it as the pure notion of the activity of the universe conditioned by what Whitehead calls the "objective immortality" of the actual world. The world is always changing, though at the same time it possesses a certain stable element of divine ordering. The changing world, which is never the same twice, we experience as the "passage" of nature. Now in physical science, there are certain quantities called "vectors," i.e. quantities that are "passed on." These are more fundamental than "scalar" quantities, which are constructs derivative from vectors. In the Organic Philosophy the notion of "passing on" or vectors employed in physical science becomes "creativity," bearing the meaning "to bring forth," "to beget," "to produce." No actual entity in the world can be divorced from the notion of Creativity. Indeed, as we shall see later, every actual entity must be thought of as a "mode" of the ultimate creativity which it conditions by its own unique achievement.

"Creativity" is thus the ultimate notion of highest generality at the base of actuality. It is the universal of universals. It cannot be characterized because all characters are more special than itself. If we wish to learn anything further concerning creativity, we must pay regard to its "creatures," since it is they which constitute its shifting character. This transcendent Creativity is, as we have said, conditioned in its activity by the occasions of the actual world. It is also qualified by God, who is at once the outcome of creativity, the foundation of the world's order, and the goal towards novelty. Its two attributes are (1) that of pluralizing itself into a multiplicity of finite individual actual entities, and (2) the realm of possibility, which we shall see later is the realm of eternal objects corresponding to Plato's realm of "Ideas."

## *Actual Entities*

We now turn to consider the idea of an "Actual Entity" and its place in the system of the Organic Philosophy. What is an actual entity? At the outset it is well to be put on our guard against the temptation to think of actual entities, in the Philosophy with which we are concerned, as "substances" such as silk or wood or iron. They are not static substances with certain qualities, but "processes." Another name for an actual entity is an "occasion of experience," and an occasion of experience is described as being a "prehensive unity." It will, therefore, help us to understand the nature of an actual entity, if we can give an example which shows how an "occasion of experience" is also a "prehensive unity." Briefly it may

be said that "prehension" is a way of experiencing other things as *constitutive* of the actual experience of an occasion.

Imagine two young men, John and William, on a walking tour in the English counties bordering on Wales. John knows the district well, to William it is novel. On reaching the summit of a hill, John points to a distant building visible from where the two are standing, and asks William how the building appears to him. William replies that, at the distance he is *from it*, the building indicated seems only a small round tower. John then tells William that he knows the building, and has many times visited it; that, in reality, it is no small round tower, but a large square building with battlements and turrets, which apparently William does not see. The two young men begin to discuss the disparity between what the building is in its own "place" or separate setting, several miles away, and what it is from the place where they are now standing. They come to the conclusion that the object which William strictly and properly perceives by sight cannot be the thing which is several miles distant because "a small round tower" is one thing, and "a large square building with battlements and turrets" another.

The illustration I have just given is one example of an "occasion of experience" which is also a "prehensive unity." We can see at once that William's perception is an occasion of experience, since it is one of the events in his life-history. But the occasion of experience is also a "prehensive unity." The "small, round tower" which William sees from the hill where he is standing is a unity, *from a certain standpoint*, of "aspects" of other things in other places. That is to say, it is a prehensive unity of aspects of the "large square building with battlements and turrets" situate some miles from William's place of vision. Such an "occasion of experience" is what is meant by an "actual entity" in the Organic Philosophy. It will be observed that the notion stands for a unit of experience mirroring other aspects of the world from its own unique point of view. When, for example, a person is looking at a distant castle, or cloud, or planet, the things which are grasped into a realized unity, here and now, are not the distant castle, cloud, or planet in themselves, in their own separate settings, but rather "perspectives" of the castle, cloud, or planet from the standpoint of the prehensive unification.<sup>1</sup> A prehensive occasion of experience is, thus, a process of unification of aspects of other things, and such a process is an actual entity. Every actual entity "takes account of" the essential character of other things, and this "taking account of" is its

<sup>1</sup> "Prehension" is a technical term which can most simply be explained as meaning "apprehension" without the "ap," i.e. without awareness. Whitehead points out that Bacon regarded objects as all "perceiving" one another to the extent that they affected each other.

prehension of aspects of other entities as constituents of its own becoming.

At this point we may call attention to the assumption that has dominated the philosophy of science throughout the modern era, called by Whitehead "the fallacy of simple location." It is the view that a piece of matter is in a definite region of space and throughout a definite duration of time, apart from any essential reference of the relation of that thing or quality to other regions of space and to other durations of time. This view is based on the error of considering space and time as the "loci of simple locations." But space and time are simply abstractions from the totality of prehensive unifications, mutually patterned in each other. If, as we have seen, an actual occasion of experience is a prehensive unity of *perspectives*, the things that are prehended into a realised unity *here and now* are aspects of things in other places *from the special point of view of the percipient occasion*. That is to say, the notion of the primitive entities of Nature being "prehensive unities" shows that the assumption of 'simple' location is a fallacy.

Perhaps an illustration will make this clear. Imagine you are perceiving a single *sense-object* "green" in a blade of grass. Now the theory of prehensions implies that the green is not simply at the place where you are perceiving it, nor in the blade where it is seen, but must be regarded as *at the point of view of the percipient occasion* (i.e. yourself), with its mode of location in the blade.<sup>1</sup>

Actual entities, then, are processes prehending aspects of other things into novel occasions of experience.<sup>2</sup> The example we gave of William on the brow of the hill prehending the distant castle in the form of a small, round tower as one of the occasions constituting his life history, was from the high-grade organism we call "Man." Can we say that the actual entities constituting nature as a whole are also occasions of experiencing? The Philosophy of Organism asserts that we can. It contends that all natural entities, forming star systems, planets, rocks, molecules or atoms are generically of the same kind. All the actual entities constituting the varied universe are ultimately occasions of experience, although comparatively few of them are "conscious." They are prehensive unities, the gathering of aspects of other things into the unity of an individual atomic

<sup>1</sup> Consider a percipient event (P) at region A. Now the *mode* of a sense-object "green" at A (abstracted from the sense-object whose relationship to region A the mode is conditioning) is the aspect from A of some other region B. The sense-object "green" relates region A to region B. That is to say, the *mode* of the sense-object "green" at A is expressible as location elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> Whitehead maintains (as did Leibniz) that, while consciousness is a rare character in the universe, only found in association with high-grade organisms, "experience" is universal, because all actual entities prehend one another.

experience. The realization of natural entities is a process of synthesizing into the unity of a prehension, perspectives of other things from the standpoint of a novel creative synthesis. According to this line of thought natural entities are processes of prehension culminating in individual unities of experience. Each prehensive unity mirrors the universe from its own unique standpoint.

We may here ask how this view of nature, as a whole of individual prehensive occasions of experience, is reached by the Organic Philosophy? The answer is as follows. Whitehead starts from our own psychological field. He takes our psychological experience to be the self-knowledge of the total event we call our body. That "self-knowledge" he affirms, discloses itself as a prehensive unification of presences of entities *beyond* self-awareness. He now makes a generalization, and employs the principle that the total bodily event is, as far as nature is concerned, on the same level as all other events "except for an unusual complexity and stability of inherent pattern." Whitehead considers that this method avoids an arbitrary break in nature. It implies a principle of continuity from the level of human consciousness down the scale to inorganic matter, and leads to the "organic" conception of nature. Thus, in the Organic Philosophy, nature is conceived as a structure of evolving processes.

Before we come to an end of this section on actual entities, we shall have to ask some such question as this. If the Organic Philosophy asserts that "reality is the process," how are we to think of those things in the world which have the character of "endurance." for there certainly are enduring things? We shall return to this question later. In the meantime, let us learn a little more detail concerning actual entities.

"Actual entities" or "actual occasions" are said to be the real things of which the world is made. They are atomic and individual in their nature, not substances but processes. The process is a growth from phase to phase ending in a definite achievement. It is a way of bringing various elements into a real unity, and this is accomplished by a genuine creative synthesis. An actual entity "mirrors" the whole world from its special standpoint as a unity of experience, though not necessarily as a "conscious" experience. Aspects of all the other occasions of the world are synthesized according to the "principle of relevance" in every new occasion, and the synthesis of perspectives of the world from the standpoint of the given novel occasion is the new actual entity or new atomic creature. The means whereby other actual occasions are brought together into a novel unity, is through the functioning of eternal objects (to be discussed later). It is they that relate one occasion to another, thus effecting a new synthesis.

Actual entities as understood by Whitehead are fundamentally teleological, that is, they all seek goals. In this aspect they are called

## PHILOSOPHY

by Whitehead "subjects"; but when their goal is reached they still retain their efficacy although of a different kind, and in this aspect are called "objects." As objects, they exercise efficient causation in the form of data offered to a new occasion as material for a fresh synthesis. That is to say, the new occasion prehends these data, and from this it follows that prehensions are intermediate phases between the data and the final unity of the process which is the subject. This view is reminiscent of Leibniz's attempt to show how both final and efficient causes operate without being inconsistent one with the other, and his view that all monads have perceptions. For Whitehead, as for Leibniz, the world of actual entities is a world of subjects enjoying experiences.

These experiences are called "prehensions" or "feelings" (as has already been briefly indicated). The term "feeling" does not necessarily imply consciousness, but it does imply the logically prior concept of experience. "Feeling" or "prehension" is a neutral term used for the operation of passing from the objectivity of the data presented for the synthesis, to the subjective immediacy of the actual entity—from publicity to privacy. A prehension, then, is an operation whereby aspects of *other* actual occasions are absorbed as components of a novel self-creating actual entity. Consequently an analysis of any given actual entity discloses it to consist of prehensions. But these prehensions which are components of an actual entity, are not independent entities, since they are all prehensions of one "subject" to which they belong and from which they cannot be torn.

Actual entities are "modes" of the ultimate creativity of the universe. They are units of experience mirroring the universe from their unique points of view. Since they aim at mirroring the universe from their own special standpoints, they must be regarded as "self-creative." In achieving the "ends" or "satisfactions" at which they aim, each actual entity attains a value which none other can share. Thus an actual entity can be analysed into (1) activity, (2) conditioned potentialities there for synthesis, and (3) an aesthetic value representing the outcome of the synthesis. Whitehead informs us that "the unity of all occasions forbids the analysis of activities into *independent* entities. Each individualized activity is nothing but the mode in which the general activity is individualized amid the imposed conditions. . . . The general activity is not an entity in the sense in which occasions or eternal objects are entities. It is a general metaphysical character which underlies all occasions, in a particular mode for each occasion. Its attributes are its character of individualization into a multiplicity of modes, and the realm of eternal objects, which are synthesized in these modes."<sup>1</sup> It will be obvious

<sup>1</sup> *Science and the Modern World*, p. 245.

that there is nothing in the temporal world with which we can compare the ultimate general activity, since all activities in the actual world must necessarily be more special than the ultimate activity.

There are two types of feeling in an actual entity, "physical" and "conceptual." Its "physical" feelings are its prehensions of other actual entities functioning as potential data for its synthesis: its "conceptual" feelings are derived from its prehensions of eternal objects functioning as forms of definiteness. In consequence of these two types of feeling, every actual entity is said to have a "physical pole" and a "mental pole." The potential data offered to a novel actual occasion for synthesis, function as "efficient" causes, whereas the "end" at which the concrescent actual occasion aims is the "final" cause. Thus an actual entity both suffers efficient causation and enjoys final causation.

From this description of an actual entity, it will be readily discerned that its nature is essentially "social." Its very being consists of prehensions of occasions other than itself as components. An actual entity has "concern" for other occasions both in the present and in the past. It mirrors within itself modes of its contemporaries as a display of immediate achievement; and it also mirrors modes of its predecessors as "memories" within its own present. It also reflects within itself such aspects as the future throws back into its present as "anticipation." Thus an actual entity has commerce with the past, present, and future.

Summing up this account of actual entities, we can say that it discloses nature to be a structure of evolving processes. The most ultimate universal is "Creativity," the notion which stands for the underlying activity of realization, individualizing itself into an interlocked plurality of modes. Each actual entity is a finite achievement, a definite matter of fact, issuing from the individualizing of the ultimate underlying activity of nature as a whole, into a system of interlocking concrescent processes, each realizing its own appropriate value. Space and Time exhibit the general scheme of interlocked relations of this system of prehensions, no one of which can be torn from its context. Nevertheless, each occasion or actual entity has within its context genuine reality, for each occasion, from its own standpoint, unifies the modalities belonging to the whole universe. Moreover, since each actual entity mirrors within itself the past, present, and future, we must think of the world as containing memory of the past and anticipation of the future as well as immediacy of realization of the present.

### *Enduring Things*

The time has come to deal with the question raised earlier as to the way in which we are to think of enduring things. If nature is

## PHILOSOPHY

a structure of processes, how comes it about that there are things, such as molecules and mountains, which last for a very long time? The answer to this question given by the Organic Philosophy is as follows:

An enduring thing, such as a molecule or a mountain, is really a *society* of actual occasions or actual entities, enjoying a special type of "order." First of all let us be clear in our minds as to the meaning of the term "society" of actual occasions. A "society" of actual occasions is a nexus of occasions with a common element of form, the common element of form being the "defining characteristic" of the society. This form is really a complex eternal object, illustrated in each member of the nexus, each member inheriting it from those other members genetically preceding its own concrescence. A "society," then, is a group of actual entities, each member of which participates in a common form. Now an enduring object is a society of actual occasions enjoying a specific type of order termed "personal." "Personal" order means that the genetic relatedness of the members of a society of occasions imposes a "serial order" upon them. This "serial order" enjoyed by certain societies of occasions has an important effect. It secures that there is one single line of inheritance of the defining characteristic of the nexus from one occasion to the other. A society, enjoying "personal" order as defined above, is an enduring object.

It should be observed that the characteristic of an enduring object is that it sustains a certain character by reason of the special genetic relations subsisting among the members of the society. It can be said that "Endurance" is a device by which each actual occasion in a society is bound by a line of physical ancestry. The "likeness" between the successive occasions of an historic route or chain of events procures an identity in respect of their contributions to the chain, and this emphasizes the imposition of conformity. In other words, an historic route of occasions with personal order tends to prolong itself into the future in consequence of the weight of uniform inheritance derived from its members. The result is an enduring object, which is nothing else but a route of occasions or chain of actual entities propagating the same "form" throughout the route or chain. For example, a corpuscle is an enduring object, constituted by a chain of antecedent and subsequent occasions, throughout which a permanent form is propagated from one atomic occasion to another—rather in the same way as a stick of sugar-rock, which children love, has the same pattern reiterated in every part of the stick.

The conception of an "enduring object" is, therefore, bound up with the notion of the reiteration of a pattern of shape and value throughout a route of occasions forming a society enjoying personal order. The shape of value is, as we have seen, the reflection of a

## WHITEHEAD'S PHILOSOPHY: THE WORLD AS *PROCESS*

complex eternal object. The reiteration of a particular shape of value occurs when the event as a whole (say a mountain) repeats some shape which is also exhibited in each of a succession of its parts, i.e. in the succession of occasions constituting the life-history of the mountain. The point to make clear is this. The mountain throughout a thousand or a hundred years of its history, throughout a year, throughout a day, throughout a minute, throughout a second and so on, exhibits the same pattern or defining characteristic. That is to say, the mountain, in realizing itself under the guise of an "enduring thing," lasting it may be for thousands of years, displays in the total event the same pattern as is exhibited in each of the occasions constituting its life-history. Consequently in the total event which is the mountain, there is a "memory" of the pattern dominating its antecedent life-history as having formed an element of value in its genetic environment.

The conception of an "enduring object" as a serial route of occasions forming a society with a common "form" or pattern amongst its members, is analysable into two abstractions, namely: (1) the enduring society which has emerged as a real matter of fact to be taken account of by other things, and (2) an underlying eternal energy in whose nature there stands an envisagement of the realm of all eternal objects. Whitehead wishes us to understand that this *envisagement* is the growth of the individualized "thoughts" or "ideas" which emerge as "aspects" grasped within the life-history of the subtler and more complex enduring patterns.

This mention of an eternal energy envisaging the realm of eternal objects, leads us to the second part of our lecture dealing with the eternal aspect of the universe.

### *Eternal Objects*

Any scheme of thought purporting to be an analysis of Nature must face the two facts of "change" and "endurance." This has been done by the *Organic Philosophy in its treatment of actual entities* and enduring things. But there is a third fact to be taken account of in the analysis of Nature which we may call "eternality," and this fact now claims our attention.

"Eternal Objects" are described as "pure potentials for the specific determination of fact" or "forms of definiteness." That is to say, eternal objects are forms which determine the *kind* of feeling the subject of any occasion experiences. Occasions or actual entities are, as we have seen, "processes": Eternal Objects constitute the "howness" of the process, and this "howness" of the concrescence determines the "whatness" of the actual entity. Consequently as Whitehead says, "the things which are temporal arise by their participation in the things which are eternal."



## PHILOSOPHY

An example of something that is eternal is colour. Contrast a colour with a physical existent such as a mountain. The latter may endure for ages, but given a sufficient lapse of time, it gradually wears away and finally disappears. A colour, on the other hand, say a specific shade of blue, is not a physical event like a mountain, and therefore, is exempt from the ravages of time. A colour is something that transcends physical events. It "ingresses" into nature to lend its quality to any event that may require it for a period, but when its function for the time being is over, it disappears, to return when its presence is again relevant. But, when it returns, it is the *same* colour. Once more, consider the shapes we call "round" and "oval" or other geometrical forms. These forms do not emerge from nature, although nature requires them to give definiteness to its processes. They "ingress" into nature to give their forms to transitory events. When the events which they characterize have passed away and perished, the specific shapes also disappear, but the *same* shapes "roundness" and "ovalness" reappear when they are again required by nature. It is, therefore, clear that such entities as colour and shape are different from temporal things. They are not processes and consequently belong to a realm different from the temporal. They are, in fact, pure "potentials," or in other words eternal "forms."

We can discern the "transcendence" of eternal objects in this way. Suppose an eternal object—say a definite shade of red—is in a certain actual entity the colour found with a round shape (another eternal object). The actual occasion in which the shade of red and the spherical shape are mutually implicated does not prevent the same colour and the same shape from characterizing *other* occasions either together or separately at different times. That is to say, many occasions may be both red and spheroid, or, again, many occasions may be informed of a spherical shape, but not be red. This being so, it is clear that an eternal object is not exhausted by its ingression into any particular occasion. It can ingress into a multitude of occasions at the same time, or at different times and different places, as it is required. This means that eternal objects are transcendent in respect of particular spatio-temporal events. Now it will be apparent that what transcends particular processes must be quite different from specific matter of fact. The mode of being of eternal objects is such as to be unaffected by the flux of events which come and go. Although they determine the "forms" of events, they, themselves, are not events. They are potentials determining the "howness" of occasions constituting matters of fact, but they, themselves, are not matters of fact. Indeed the defining characteristic of an eternal object is that it is an entity that does not involve a necessary reference to any definite actual entities of the temporal world. In brief, entities of this kind are "eternal."

Eternal objects, then, are such entities as colours, sounds, tastes, touches, geometrical characters. When conscious feeling is concerned, they define the varying kinds of emotion and intensities of feeling, and the different sorts of pleasures and pains. In their function as determinants of feeling, they indicate "how" feeling is felt, and consequently "what" the feeling is. As an example of an eternal object functioning in the realm of emotion, we may mention "pity." In the sphere of moral conduct the term "goodness" stands for an eternal object; and "justice" is another eternal object applicable to a society whose behaviour is equitable. Both the latter are patterns of human values informing the behaviour of persons or of a society.

Eternal objects also come to light in untrue but *significant* propositions. For example, if I assert of this blue lupin that it is yellow, I am saying something untrue, but significant, significant because lupins *can* be yellow. That is to say, untrue propositions, provided they are predicated *significantly* of a given occasion "A," are alternative suggestions, and such alternative suggestions inform us that the occasion "A" is set within a realm of alternative interconnected entities. All the untrue, significant propositions concerning an actual occasion, reveal to us this wider interconnected system in which "A" has its place. But this means that the understanding of *actuality* requires a reference to *ideality* and this ideality is the realm of alternative suggestions disclosed by untrue but *significant* propositions. Now the realm of alternative suggestions is the realm of eternal objects—it is the realm of possibility contrasted with the realm of actuality. Both realms are intrinsically inherent in the total metaphysical situation in which any given actual entity is involved.

The realm of eternal objects is called a "realm" because each eternal object not only has an *individual* essence, i.e. its being a specific shape, colour, sound or feeling—but also a "relational" essence. By "relational" essence it is meant that an eternal object, considered as an abstract entity, cannot be divorced from its "internal" relationships to all other eternal objects. A part of its very nature, i.e. its relational character is constituted by this system of relations. Because of this inter-relatedness of eternal objects, any actual entity prehends, either positively or negatively, either as being or non-being, the whole realm of eternality.

If we are seeking to know "what" a given actual entity is, we must be able to say "how" a selection of eternal objects ingress into the actual occasion and how this selection is graded. The principle governing the realization of eternal objects is called "the principle of the degrees of relevance," which operates thus. In a given occasion some eternal objects will be realized in respect of their full essence, others will be realized in respect of some only of the relations that constitute their essence, whilst others may be entirely

excluded. In the latter extreme case, the relations which constitute the relational essences of the excluded eternal objects, may still be thought of as ingredient in the actual occasion, though in a negative way. They are ingredient as "unfulfilled alternatives." They do not contribute to the aesthetic synthesis of the actual occasion, but they do contribute features to its final emotional tone. These "unfulfilled" possibilities "might" have been realized, but in fact, in the given occasion are not. But, like those citizens excluded from sharing in the wealth of the state, they, nevertheless, by their very exclusion, exercise an influence on the minds of the privileged, even if only that of self-reproach.

There are certain distinctions among eternal objects themselves which I may mention but not elaborate. Some eternal objects are "simple" as, for example, the specific shade of Cambridge Blue, or the form of a circle; whilst others are of various grades of complexity. A complex eternal object of a low grade can be conceived in the following way. Let A, B, C, be three definite colours (red, orange, and green) with the spatio-temporal relatedness to each other of a regular tetrahedron *any where at any time*. Then R (A, B, C,) is an eternal object of the lowest complex grade. It will be obvious that there will be eternal objects of successively higher grades, since the possible combinations of eternal objects with each other are infinite. There are also two distinct classes of eternal objects, (1) the "objective," (2) the "subjective" class. The "objective" species are limited in their function to supplying forms of definiteness to data. By a necessity of its nature, an eternal object of the objective class is an *agent of relation*. It links the old occasions of the world, which have attained their ends, with new occasions which are in process of self-creation. Whitehead says, "the solidarity of the world rests upon the incurable objectivity of this species of eternal objects," and he identifies them with the mathematical platonic forms. The "subjective" species of eternal objects may enjoy a two-fold rôle. Primarily they supply the forms of the subjective feelings of actual entities. But an eternal object of the subjective species can also function as an agent of *relation* by objectifying a subjective feeling of an actual occasion A, as a datum for the feeling of a subsequent occasion B. The second class of eternal objects thus functions not only subjectively but also relationally.

Physical Science, in its analysis of nature, seems unable to deal satisfactorily with the "subjective" species of eternal objects, though competent to handle eternal objects of the "objective" species. The reason is this. Physical science is concerned not with the concrement *subject* in the phases of its growth, but only with the *achievement* of the process, namely, "matter of fact." It is not concerned with the "genetic becoming" of an actual entity in which final causation is

## WHITEHEAD'S PHILOSOPHY: THE WORLD AS *PROCESS*

operating; it merely analyses its complexity in its function of efficient cause. But an actual entity, as a subject reaching out after an end, must be credited with final as well as efficient causation. Because of this, there is elbow room in the universe for freedom.

The description given above of the realm of eternality will, we hope, bring home the truth that actuality is in essential relation to an unfathomable possibility. Eternal objects inform actual occasions with hierarchic patterns, included and excluded in every variety of discrimination. Every occasion is a synthesis of all eternal objects *under the limitations of gradations of actuality*, and because actuality is through and through "togetherness," every actual entity is likewise a synthesis of all occasions under the limitations of gradations of types of entry. Thus each occasion synthesises the totality of content under its own limitation of "mode."<sup>1</sup> This "graded envisagement" of the full sweep of eternal relations which each actual occasion prehends in its synthesis, involves the acknowledgement that (in one sense) *non-being* (i.e. the realm of eternal forms) is a positive factor in the achievement of every actual entity. In the language of Whitehead "it is the source of error, of truth, of art, of ethics and religion. By it fact is confronted with alternatives."<sup>2</sup>

It follows from what has been said, that in order to understand the spatio-temporal world, it is necessary to take account of the realm of eternality. It is this realm which provides what is permanent in the general flux of events. The universe is both a passage and something that is permanent. The passage is the interlocked system of processes which we have called "occasions of experience." Its permanent features are the "eternal" forms which ingress into the flux of events and give them a definite and determinate character. Apart from them, the world would be "without form and void," and *value* would be non-existent. Hence the things that are temporal need for their being the things that are eternal, and a metaphysic of the universe must include, as complementary facets, both the realm of the actual and the realm of the ideal.

### God

Before proceeding to an exposition of the line of argument by which Whitehead arrives at the conception of "God," I wish to warn the reader that Whitehead's conception differs from the traditional view of Western theology. In the organic philosophy, God is not the omnipotent creator of the universe, but rather its infinite ground of rationality, and the supreme principle persuasive of ultimate unity. In other words, God is not *before* all creation, but *with* all creation. He must not be identified with the Creativity

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Science and the Modern World*, p. 245.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 247.

## PHILOSOPHY

of the universe which transcends, not only any actual entity in the world, but also God. Whitehead reminds us that if, in accordance with traditional Western theological thought, God is regarded as the creator of the world, then, as the supreme author of the play, we must ascribe to Him the origin of all evil as of all good. But if He is conceived, not as the world's creator, but as the supreme ground for limitation, the principle of rational order, and the ultimate conservator of values, then it follows that it stands in His very nature to divide the good from the evil, to establish the supremacy of reason within her own domain, and to be persuasive of ultimate harmonious unity through the patient operation of His own invincible rationality.

I will first explain the notion of God as the principle of limitation, treated by Whitehead in *Science and the Modern World*. This will be followed by an account of his development of the idea of God in *Process and Reality*, as the non-temporal actual being endowing the realm of eternal forms with effectiveness and an order of relevance for realization in the temporal world. And, finally, I will attempt to show how Whitehead conceives the multiplicity of values achieved in the world of rugged existence as being received into God's eternal nature and there co-ordinated into a harmonious unity.

In the section dealing with "Creativity," we learnt that eternal possibility and modal differentiation into individual multiplicity, are its two attributes. Now, in the general metaphysical situation it is disclosed that Creativity, in its attribute of modality, is *limited* in two distinct ways. In the first place, Creativity is embodied in an actual course of events which might be otherwise as far as eternal possibility is concerned. This limitation takes the three forms of (a) conformation to logical relations, (b) the selection of causal relations, and (c) the "particularity" of events. Hence the first limitation is one of selection from an indefinite range of possibilities. Metaphysically speaking, there might have been an indiscriminate pluralism without logical or other limitation. But in that case there would not have been the modes that there are, "for each mode represents a synthesis limited to conform to a standard." It can be said that limitation has been imposed as the price of *value*. That which is merely possible and unlimited has no value. Value arises only with the actualization into finite entities. This factor of "value" leads to the second limitation. There cannot be value without antecedent *standards* to enable the envisaging activity to discriminate, for acceptance or rejection of what is before it. Thus, there is also a limitation and selection among possible values based upon certain standards. There is, therefore, a metaphysical need for a principle of limitation.

<sup>1</sup> *Science and the Modern World*, p. 249

## WHITEHEAD'S PHILOSOPHY: THE WORLD AS *PROCESS*

The principle of limitation in the general metaphysical situation is one aspect of what is subsequently called "The Primordial Nature of God." It is an element in the attribute of the ultimate activity. This element provides the limitation "for which no reason can be given, as all reason flows from it"—the ultimate irrational ground of rationality. Such briefly is Whitehead's account of God as the principle of limitation.

Let us now consider the "eternal" aspect of God's nature, and its function in the scheme of things. The "ontological principle," fundamental to the organic philosophy, asserts that the only *reasons* for things are actual entities. In the previous section we learnt that the realm of eternal objects is the general potentiality of the universe. What actuality, then, is the reason for this general potentiality? Whitehead's reply to this question is that it is "the primordial nature of God," who must be regarded from the abstract point of view of our present approach, as a non-temporal actual entity. "The things that are temporal arise by their participation in the things that are eternal," and the two sets of entities, (1) actual occasions, and (2) eternal objects, are *mediated* by a unique entity combining the actuality of what is temporal with the timelessness of what is potential. This non-temporal actual entity<sup>1</sup> is both the principle of concrescence in the universe, "the principle whereby there is initiated a definite outcome from a situation otherwise riddled with ambiguity," as well as the effective source of its potentiality.

Whitehead reminds us that the plurality of eternal objects, regarded in their bare isolated multiplicity, lack any *existent* character. They are only possibilities. Consequently to be "efficacious" they require to be related to the primordial nature of God as the non-temporal actual entity "conceptually" realizing them as an efficacious function in the multiple unifications of the universe by self-creative actual entities. We may say that "the primordial nature of God" is the acquisition by the ultimate activity of the universe, of a primordial character functioning as the unlimited conceptual realization of the wealth of potentiality. In this aspect "He is not *before* all creation, but *with* all creation." Moreover, in this abstract aspect He is deficient in actuality in two ways. In the first place, as "primordial," His feelings are *conceptual* only. In the second place, He is devoid of consciousness, since "conceptual" feelings (i.e. feelings of eternal objects), apart from integration with physical feelings, are not accompanied by consciousness.

The "primordial nature of God" is thus the unconditioned actuality of conceptual feelings at the base of things, providing an "order"

<sup>1</sup> The most fruitful way of conceiving God's "eternal" nature is to think of it as a vision and "valuation" of the realm of eternal forms, accompanied by an urge for their actualization in an orderly way in finite things.

in the relevance of eternal objects to the process of creation. It is to be noted that God's unity of conceptual operations is untrammelled by reference to any *particular* course of things. "He is deflected neither by love nor by hate from what in fact comes to pass. The particularity of the actual world presupposes it: while it merely presupposes the general metaphysical character of creative advance. . . . The primordial nature of God is the acquirement by Creativity of a primordial character."<sup>1</sup> As the "envisager of relevance" of the creative advance of the world, the primordial nature of God establishes the *initial* phase of the subjective aspect of each actual entity. But the initial phase *only*, since in respect of the subsequent phases of concrescence the actual entity is self-creative. The primordial nature of God also constitutes the metaphysical stability of the universe. He is the "ground" enabling the actual processes of the temporal world to exemplify general principles of metaphysics, and to attain the ends congruent with specific types of emergent order. Were it not for God's primordial valuation, there would be a complete disjunction of eternal objects unrealized in the temporal world, and novelty would be inconceivable.

We are now in a position to proceed to an understanding of God in His complete nature.

#### *The "consequent" nature of God*

In the Organic Philosophy, the "primordial nature of God" is only one aspect of His full being. The other aspect is termed the "consequent nature of God," which is the notion of God as receiver and co-ordinator of values. It is explained thus. By reason of the relativity of all things, there is said to be a reaction of the temporal, physical world upon God's primordial nature, completing it by the addition of physical feelings derived from the actual world. The temporal world, constituted of occasions or processes, is "objectified" in God as His physical feelings. "This prehension into God of each creature is directed with the subjective aim, and clothed with the subjective form wholly derivative from His all-inclusive valuation."<sup>2</sup> Although God's "conceptual nature" is unchanged by this weaving of physical feelings upon His primordial concepts, the reception of feelings from the temporal world endows Him with full actuality and consciousness. Moreover, God's "consequent nature" links Him with the temporal world, since this is derivative from the creative advance of the world.

It is important to realize that the "consequent nature" of God implies that although God and the world may be opposed in our thought, they cannot in reality be torn apart. The following quotation will drive this truth home.

<sup>1</sup> *Process and Reality*, p. 487.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 468.

"God and the world stand over against each other, expressing the final metaphysical truth that appetitive vision and physical enjoyment have equal claim to priority in creation. But no two actualities can be torn apart: each is all in all. Thus each temporal occasion embodies God, and is embodied in God. In God's nature, permanence is primordial and flux is derivative from the World: in the World's nature, flux is primordial and permanence is derivative from God; also the World's nature is a primordial datum for God, and God's nature is a primordial datum for the World. Creation achieves the reconciliation of permanence and flux when it has reached its final term which is everlastingness—the apotheosis of the World."<sup>1</sup>

Let us pause for a moment and consider the meaning of this passage. In the first place it declares that the world is as necessary for God, as God is for the world, and that both God and the world are necessary for Creativity. Apart from God and the realm of eternal forms, the world is meaningless; apart from Creativity and the world of actual entities, God is meaningless; and apart from God and the turbulent active world, Creativity is meaningless. This mutual interdependence of the various aspects of the universe is the reason why the fundamental ideas employed in the description of the universe presuppose each other. In the second place, we are told that Creation achieves an ultimate reconciliation of permanence and flux in a state of unity called "everlastingness." Now this state of unity which is the final term achieved by the movement of Creation, is what is meant by the Consequent Nature of God. So that the Consequent Nature of God is the notion of the completion of the ideal unity of vision of the realm of eternal forms seeking realization in physical multiplicity, by the prehension into God of the actual entities of the real world. This reception of the world into God's eternal nature and its unification with that nature, is what is meant by the phrase "the apotheosis of the World." In the third place, we learn that there is no final static completion of the universe. Both God and the world are in the grip of the fundamental metaphysical ground—the creative advance into novelty. That is to say, the world is ever expanding by the becoming of novel actual entities, and God is likewise ever enlarging His heaven by the reception of the new values which these actual entities achieve.

The notion of "everlastingness," which is the property of combining creative advance with the retention of mutual immediacy, involves the view that every actuality is prehended into a perfected system. All the events of the turbulent, physical world, with their sufferings, failures, and triumphs, are ultimately woven into a

<sup>1</sup> *Process and Reality*, pp. 493-4.



harmony of universal feelings which is "always many, always one, always with novel advance, moving onwards and never perishing."<sup>1</sup> Destructive evil, purely self-regarding, is dismissed by the supreme harmonizer into the triviality of mere individual facts. But all the values in the world of occasions which can be saved from perishing, are woven into a whole of harmonious feeling enriched by the variety of contrasts. This is the judgement of tenderness which loses nothing that can be saved. Thus God, from this point of view, may be regarded as the "poet" of the world, saving it by His vision of truth, beauty, and goodness.<sup>2</sup> God does not create the world, but saves it. He is persuasive of ultimate harmonious unity through the patient operation of His over-powering rationality.

At this stage, it is pertinent to ask what exactly is the status of the individual on being prehended into God. Does he continue, an "end" for himself, or is his status only that of a "means" for the enrichment of God's experience? This is how Whitehead answers this question. In the ultimate whole of harmonized feeling which is "everlastingness," the function of being a "means" is not disjoined from the function of being an "end." We are told that "the sense of worth beyond itself is immediately enjoyed as an overpowering element in the individual self-attainment,"<sup>3</sup> so that sorrow and pain are transformed into an element of triumph, very much as discords in art contribute to the aesthetic value of a great work. Moreover, in the perfected actuality in which the many are everlastingly one, there is no loss "either of individual identity, or of completeness of unity." We learn that the temporal actuality, on its reception into God's nature, does not "pass away," but is transmuted into an ever-present fact. The element in God's nature corresponding to each temporal actuality is not temporal actuality, but the *transmutation* of that temporal actuality into a living immediacy. If we ask how it is possible that the past survives in God's nature in full immediacy, Whitehead suggests that it occurs in somewhat the same way as a person's past survives, not in mere memory, but as summed up in a person as he is *now*: "This element in God's nature inherits from the temporal counterpart according to the same principle as in the temporal world, the future inherits from the past. Thus in the sense in which the present occasion is the person *now* and yet with his own past, so this counterpart in God is that person in God."<sup>4</sup>

### Conclusion

Our exposition of the Organic Philosophy has disclosed three creative phases in the universe. The first phase is that of "conceptual origination," infinite in the adjustment of valuation but

<sup>1</sup> *Process and Reality*, p. 489.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 495.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 490.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 496.

deficient in actuality, which has been described as the "primordial nature of God." The second phase is the self-creation of actual entities, fully actual, but lacking in the harmony of individuals with each other. The third phase is the "consequent nature of God," in which the many actual occasions are one everlastingly, without loss of individual identity or of completeness of unity. But there is a fourth and final phase. In consequence of the relativity of all things, the "consequent nature of God" floods back again into the temporal world as the special providence for each occasion. This is the view of Him as "the great companion, the fellow sufferer who understands."

One final word. The doctrine of the objective immortality of actual occasions as "potentials" for the creation of novel actual entities is fundamental in the Organic Philosophy. But the final application of this doctrine in the speculation that the occasions in the life of each creature, though perishing in the temporal world, nevertheless, albeit transformed, live everlastingly in the being of God, is bound, in the writer's view, to be a matter of acute criticism. The question will no doubt be asked, whether the principle of relativity can be made so all-embracing. Whitehead admits that in his discussion of what the metaphysical principles of the Organic Philosophy require, there is nothing of the character of "proof." He says, "there is merely the confrontation of the theoretical system with a certain rendering of the facts." But, seeing that the report upon the facts, and the system itself, is confessedly inadequate, the deductions from it as to the nature of God should not be regarded as more than "suggestions as to how the problem is transformed in the light of that system."<sup>1</sup> It is frankly acknowledged that whatever cogency the argument may have, depends upon certain exceptional experiences usually classed as moral and religious intuitions. But whether moral and religious intuitions can be made to bear the weight of the metaphysical claim of the immortality of perishing temporal occasions in the being of God, is a question that many will find hard to answer in the affirmative with confidence. In support of the doctrine Whitehead reminds us of "the insistent craving that zest for existence be refreshed by the ever-present, unfading importance of our immediate actions, which perish and yet live for evermore."<sup>2</sup> Is the nature of Reality such as to justify this insistent craving? In other words is God not only the "reservoir of potentiality" and the source of ideals, but also the "co-ordinator of achievement" as the doctrine suggests? It is around this question of the ultimate unity of the world of temporal occasions in the being of God, that the debate will be most concentrated. In this debate it must never

<sup>1</sup> *Process and Reality*, p. 486.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 496.

be forgotten that "existence, in its own nature, is the upholding of value-intensity." Every pulsation of actuality has some value. But since no unit exists in isolation, every actuality not only has value for itself but for others and the whole of which it is a perspective. Consequently, as Whitehead says—"Everything that in any sense exists has two sides, namely, its individual self and its significance in the universe; either of these factors is a factor of the other."<sup>1</sup> The understanding of the universe requires that both the eternal world and the temporal world should exhibit the impress of the other.

I have now reached the end of my exposition of Whitehead's philosophy of the world as process. You will have gathered from this exposition that the universe is both a passage and something that is permanent, both temporal and eternal. On the one hand there is the general flux of events; on the other hand there are the eternal forms (the source of qualities and values) which ingress into the flux of events and provide them with a definite and determinate character. Also at the root of things, there is God, the ground of whatever rationality there is in things. Hence the things that are temporal need for their being the things that are eternal, and a Metaphysic of the universe must include as complementary facets both the realm of the actual and the realm of the ideal.

<sup>1</sup> Lecture on "Immortality" in *The Philosophy of Alfred Frank Whitehead* (North-Western University Press, 1941).

## NEW BOOKS

*Space and Spirit: Theories of the universe and the arguments for the existence of God.* By SIR EDMUND WHITTAKER, F.R.S. (Nelson, 1946. 6/-.)

There are two strands of thought and intention in this book, unequally developed. To begin with it is a clear historical account of Hellenic, Hellenistic, and medieval concepts of matter, substance, space, etc., with some contemporary theological associations Christian and non-Christian but not including the theologies of other great institutional religions. The account is carried forward into an equally clear history of some more modern aspects of the concept of causality, down to the present day. Sir Edmund's skill in drawing examples from his unrivalled mathematical experience blends curiously with his vigorous dislike of Neoplatonists, possibly because he suspects them of indecisive segregation of their empirical from their mystical interests concerning numbers, and of missing a genuine logical treatment between these. Neoplatonists were not alone in this vice, to which many of Sir Edmund's theological heroes were also addicted. He is not fair to the Neoplatonists, many of whom, such as Nicholas of Cusa, played as honourable a part in pre-modern science and philosophy as the names rescued by this book and introduced so intriguingly to a wider than specialist public.

Beyond the clarity in expounding this early history itself, a feat of considerable originality for which the book will be widely read, the most distinctive individuality is the rewriting of the famous medieval "proofs" of theism into modern language; this will be universally welcomed. But at numerous places the author goes so far as to hint that concepts in modern physics can turn this "re-translating" into a genuine "reinforcing": that will not be at all universally agreed. For the symbolic and provisional validity claimed by the fluctuating concepts under which an external world is regarded today accord ill with the frozen and inflexible certainties of medieval thought, and it does not come readily to most contemporary scientific philosophers to flatter themselves that they have proved anything at all beyond the forms of their knowledge. To leap from this form to theorems of the existence of the somewhat anthropomorphic deity argued by medieval ecclesiastics is a mental athleticism which feels acrobatic and strained. The attempt to graft today's cosmological physics, of whatever school, upon the curiously artificial intricacies of the Aquinean logic, is as if a painter were to try to reproduce the exquisite Dutch interiors of the seventeenth century under a post-impressionist, cubist, or even surrealist manner. The approach is foreign and the result bizarre, and any theological apologist inclined to hail this gift from science may well pause and fear the aliens *et dona ferentes*. The misfit is inevitable: today "proof" is not a desideratum so much as a horrendum in the philosophy of religion. For a thinking majority now recognize that personal or even mystical conviction comes home to the modern scientist and non-scientist more vividly than any argued "natural theology," whereas it is natural theology, not personal theology, with which Sir Edmund is exclusively concerned. We believe in something that we each cherish as sacred, but "belief" today is not a logically directed act of intellectual assent: whether we symbolize our individual conviction of the sacred by embodying it in spatial concepts or not, few now derive those concepts from any of corresponding name in the physical sciences. In fact, the question of what kind of spatial concepts are required, by the

epistemology of a physical or of any other external world-model, is apt to be answered on grounds aesthetic rather than rigidly binding as were the proofs in which the medieval theologians framed their neat and tidy but imprisoning foundations of theism. It would seem a gallant but unavailing effort to retell those proofs except as items of anthropological interest, and definitely repugnant to associate them with the very different meanings assigned in modern physics to "space," "matter," and other terms which merely sum up definite measurement rather than describe "things."

Strangely enough, in sections 32-36, where Sir Edmund offers a very readable and brilliantly compressed account of "the observable," "the measurable," and other terms dissecting the concepts of indeterminacy and causality in recent physics, there can be discovered the very reasons why there is no analogy between the cosmology of today and that of the medieval mind: the old theologian took his cosmology from a science which he supposed was a description of entities only differing in size from objects of perception, whereas today, as Sir Edmund himself so ably shows, the rational is symbolic rather than descriptive. What Whitehead called the "scientific object" has not the same epistemological or metaphysical status as the "perceived world" from which the medieval mind built its "natural theology," and it is doubtful whether Aquinas could have utilised our world of physics at all.

This is why we suspect that the second topic of this book, the modernization of medieval theistic arguments, will not have the lasting value of its first topic or the brilliant historical survey of what the medieval actually thought in his day before there was any modern philosophy or science.

MARTIN JOHNSON.

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*Ethical and Political Thinking* By E. F. CARRITT. (Oxford University Press. Pp 186. Price 10s net.)

The nature and purpose of the ethical thinking, which is described in this work and which occupied a prominent place in the studies of teachers and pupils in Oxford in the inter-war years, might, I think, be briefly summed up: clarity the end, analysis the means, and "definition and discrimination" of ethical terms the method. To-day doubts are being expressed in many quarters as to the adequacy of this programme. Its scope is believed to be too narrow and its objective too limited. We are told that "clarity is not enough," that "analysis should be supplemented by synopsis and synthesis," that we should move "towards a new moral philosophy." Whether or not these doubts are well grounded, the time is opportune for a clear and concise statement of the scope, method and problems of these enquiries and of their considerable achievements in analysis and clarification. No one is better qualified to do this than Mr Carritt who, as he tells us, has, during nearly fifty years, spent some 15,000 hours discussing these problems with pupils and colleagues. The main conclusions at which he has arrived as the result of these discussions are presented in this work with freshness and vigour, as well as subtlety and ingenuity.

The main lines of the argument are familiar to students of moral philosophy from the author's earlier writings, especially his *Theory of Morals*, as well as from those of Ross and Prichard—to mention only the senior members of the New Intuitionist School, and no attempt will be made to summarize them here. Indeed, as the chief merit of the work is the analysis and clarification of what are largely matters of detail, any summary statement of the conclusions arrived at would be, and would be regarded by the author as being, bound to be misleading. It should, however, be added that though

much of the ground covered is familiar the work is no mere repetition of previous arguments. It is rather a fresh rethinking of the whole position and shows some important changes in the author's views, as well as differences between him and other members of the school.

The work is divided into three parts. Part I, which covers more than three-quarters of the total, is concerned with pure ethics, its purpose being to clarify our moral thinking or our use of ethical terms. Part II deals with political thinking or the application of ethical principles to problems of government; and its main contention is that "our duties to our state do not differ in kind but only in degree of complexity from most of our other duties to our neighbours." Part III, consisting of 12 pages, deals with "morals and aesthetics" and is concerned to refute the argument, sometimes used against Intuitionists, that by admitting the subjectivity of beauty they have given away the case for the objectivity of moral judgement.

Part I traces the development of the moral thinking of the reflective moral agent, and the account of this development is based on two assumptions: that we cannot understand the rightness of the right solution until we have seen the wrongness of the wrong solutions, and that the thinking of the student of morals passes through the same stages, though not necessarily in the same order, as the historical development of ethical theories. Following this plan, Mr. Carrutt divides ethical theories other than those of his own school into two kinds, which he discusses in turn. Under the title "Non-moral theories of conduct" he deals with theories which "deny the reality of obligation." The ethical views of Professor Ayer and the different varieties of psychological hedonism are regarded as the main representatives of this class and discussed at some length. All other moral theories are classed under the dyslogistic heading of "Crude moral theories," though it is admitted that some are more crude, others less so. Considering that this title covers not only some contemporary ethical theories but all or almost all held before the present century, it seems as inaccurate as it is dyslogistic. False in whole or in part all of them may be, but crude some of them are not. They seem to suffer rather from over-subtlety and refinement. The account given of many of them is so brief as to be misleading, and I cannot help feeling that it might have been better to omit it altogether and to refer the reader to the fuller, if not more sympathetic, treatment of them in the author's *Theory of Morals*. But this would no doubt be inconsistent with the assumptions regarding the development of ethical thinking on which the plan of the book is based.

In the light of the conclusions which emerge from the discussion of wrong theories, Mr. Carrutt gives a classification of types of good and types of obligation and an account of the relation of goodness and obligation to desire. There are also chapters on punishment and freedom, but they differ little from the corresponding chapters in the *Theory of Morals*.

In the last sentence of his *Theory of Morals* Mr. Carrutt tells us "my opinions upon these matters have suffered a pretty constant development, and I have no reason to fear that this has ceased." What main developments in his views, then, have taken place since this was written?

(1) More subtle analyses have resulted in further distinctions, with corresponding changes in terminology. To give only one instance, he now distinguishes not only between objective and subjective duty, but within the latter, as the term is used, e.g. by Ross and Broad, he draws a further distinction between subjective duty (by which he means what a morally infallible being would regard a situation as he believes it to be as demanding)

and putative duty which is what I with my fallible moral insight believe the situation, as I think it, to demand. I am not sure that this distinction has added much to the clarity of the discussion. Its only merit, so far as I can see, is that it calls attention to the double dose of subjectivity in what is usually called subjective duty.

(2) Having made this distinction, Mr. Carritt, though with some hesitation, takes the view, contrary to other members of the school, that "real" duty is objective duty. Whether by "real" duty he here means what he formerly called "paramount" or "actual" duty or, as he sometimes prefers to call it, simply duty is not clear. He admits that it is only in respect of doing his putative duty that a person is subject to praise or blame; that we can never know our objective duty, and that we can only do it by accident or luck. Is it not paradoxical to say that it is my "real" duty to do an act which I do not believe to be my duty, an act for not doing which I incur neither remorse nor censure and for the doing of which I may incur both? Having carefully distinguished different senses of duty, all of them normal and legitimate, as Mr. Carritt is at pains to do, why assume that one of these is its "real" meaning and that in all our use of it it has this "real" meaning? May it not be that when I am trying to discover my duty I am thinking of objective duty, that is, trying by a careful survey of the situation and the exercise of my moral reason to get as near as I can to what is objectively right; while when I ask myself whether I have done my duty, that is, all that was morally required of me, I am thinking of putative duty?

(3) More important is a change in terminology which, though he admits that it is a departure from normal usage, enables Mr. Carritt to give a much neater analysis of both right and duty and to state his position with greater ease and clarity. He uses the term obligation to mean what Ross calls *prima facie* duty and Prichard calls claim, and he confines the term claim to the "right" of the person to whom the obligation is due to have his "claim" considered. Duty in any situation, then, becomes the strongest obligation to which that situation gives rise, and corresponding to a duty we have, on the part of the person to whom the strongest obligation is due, a right. According to this terminology, we have two pairs of correlatives, obligations and claims, duties and rights. An obligation as such is not a duty; only the strongest obligation is. A claim is not a right, except in the sense of a "right" to have one's claim considered and weighed against other and, it may be, stronger claims.

(4) Using this terminology I shall try to state the most important change in Mr. Carritt's ethical doctrines since he wrote his *Theory of Morals*, a change which brings him much nearer to the position of Ross and Prichard. In 1928 he wrote: "I cannot persuade myself that I first morally apprehend the obligation of several rules (i.e. rules of *prima facie* duties or what he now calls simply obligations), then intellectually apprehend one of the alternative actions to be an instance of one and the other of another . . . I rather think that I morally apprehend that I ought now to do this act and then intellectually generalize rules."<sup>1</sup> In other words, he then held that obligations are not immediately apprehended but are generalizations from particular concrete actions our duty to do which is so apprehended. Now he tells us that "our reason immediately apprehends that what is assumed to be the situation gives rise to obligations."<sup>2</sup> These obligations are "as self-evident as the axioms of mathematics, the law of causation, or the principles of logic."<sup>3</sup> "4 However hard we try, we cannot doubt them. 5 We see their necessity"<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Theory of Morals*, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> P. 4.

<sup>3</sup> P. 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116, cf. pp. 30-1, 70, 138.

<sup>5</sup> P. 43.

<sup>6</sup> P. 44.

## NEW BOOKS

Mr. Carritt offers no explanation of how he came to apprehend immediately the necessity of the obligations of which he was unable to persuade himself in 1928. Perhaps in a case like this where the apprehension is immediate and no process is involved we should not ask for an explanation. All we can have is testimony that the necessity is immediately apprehended. Those of us who are still unable to see the necessity may console ourselves that Mr. Carritt also was in our condition in 1928. We may even dare to hope that if we continue to meditate on these problems for 15,000 hours the light may dawn. Meantime, I think we have a right to expect rather more tolerance from Mr. Carritt for "our deficiency of moral reason."

So far the account is quite clear, whether or not we find it acceptable. It is the account of what happens when we are trying to discover our duty in a particular situation, what was formerly described as a process of immediate apprehension, but is now regarded as a weighing of the comparative strength of obligations, that I find difficult to follow. Obligations may and do conflict and then our duty is the strongest obligation. What are we to understand by the strength of an obligation, and by what principle or standard are we to measure it? The difficulty is that while reason immediately apprehends the obligation, its apprehension of it seems to be only partial. It apprehends its necessity, but apparently not its strength or at least its comparative strength when measured against another obligation. The comparative strength of obligations does not seem to be determined by their grounds; for while all obligations have grounds, the grounds of different obligations are different, and have nothing in common which could provide a basis of comparison. It is not determined by their degree of necessity, for necessity does not seem to admit of degrees. It is not determined by the urgency of the feelings they produce in us; for it is regarded as an objective characteristic of obligations. It is not determined by the goodness of that which we are obliged to do; for the results of some actions which we are obliged to do are not good.\* We are told that in moral reflection, in trying to discover what our duty in a particular situation is, it is on the obligations to which the assumed situation gives rise that we reflect,<sup>1</sup> We are also told that in this process we are liable to make mistakes,<sup>2</sup> but about the basis of comparison we are told nothing. Yet the point seems crucial, for if there is no principle or standard of measurement for this work of comparison on which we are engaged in moral reflection, what is the value of such reflection, and is there any guarantee that the more we reflect the more likely we are to discover our duty?

There is another point on which I find it difficult to be sure that I understand Mr. Carritt's argument. He devotes a good deal of attention to the nature of moral philosophy and the relation of ethical theory to moral practice. His general contention is that while ethical theory originates in the perplexities of moral practice, the hopes of practical solutions with which many students embark on it are doomed to disappointment, and they continue it, if they continue it at all, out of intellectual curiosity. The real business of moral philosophy is to clarify our ethical or moral thinking (sometimes the one term is used, sometimes the other) and particularly our use of ethical terms. But the term moral thinking is capable of being used in two different senses, and I am not sure that Mr. Carritt always distinguishes clearly between them. Moral thinking may mean the thinking of the moral agent trying to discover what his duty is or it may mean (though in this case ethical thinking seems the more appropriate term) the thinking of the ethical

\* P. 93 But inconsistently with this position, Mr. Carritt infers the goodness of pure aesthetic experience from the fact that we feel an obligation to cultivate it (p. 87).

<sup>1</sup> P. 56.

<sup>2</sup> P. 60.



## PHILOSOPHY

theorist trying to understand or explain what the moral agent is doing or thinking. The moral thinking of the moral agent especially, as Mr. Carritt puts it, his "more considered judgements are the moral philosopher's only data;" and like other scientists the ethical theorist "must not juggle with his facts" or data. But it would appear that the facts or data of the moral philosopher are not so definite as those of other scientists; for Mr. Carritt thinks that the moral philosopher "may contradict them . . . by still more careful analysis of their meaning". Now if the ethical theorist can under any circumstances contradict the more considered moral judgements of the moral agent and tell him that he is wrong, this looks more like clarifying the moral thinking of the moral agent than the ethical thinking of the theorist. What this suggests is that the data of ethics are not so definite or at least so easily accessible as many moral theorists seem to assume, and that it is more difficult to draw a clear line of distinction between ethical theory and the reflective thinking of the moral agent in his more considered and critical efforts to discover his duty than Mr. Carritt at times suggests. The point seems to me a difficult one, and I do not find Mr. Carritt's position in regard to it free from ambiguity.

If in this review I have dealt largely with points where I find Mr. Carritt's argument difficult to follow, this must not be taken to mean that I do not fully appreciate the careful and critical analysis of a work which it would be presumption on my part to praise and which every student of moral philosophy should read and master for himself

A. MACBEATH.

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\* *Ibid*

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*Morals and the New Theology.* By H. D. LEWIS. (Gollancz. London. 1947. Pp. 160. Price 7s. 6d.)

It may be doubted whether philosophers today pay much heed to what theologians are thinking or writing; not only have they problems enough of their own to occupy their attention, but they have a profound and possibly well founded suspicion that the modern theologian, is still trying to live in a traditionalist Paradise, while making one or two wholly inadequate concessions to the changed modes of thinking on religious problems which the growth of psychology, anthropology and sociology, and the all-round expansion of scientific horizons, have fostered among a large, and increasing, number of intelligent men and women. Nevertheless, many would no doubt agree with Dr. Fringle-Pattison that "it is the proper office of philosophy, or let us say of the critical reason generally, to purify religious belief and practice by teaching men to discard intellectually untenable or morally unworthy conceptions of the divine." And it is to an important aspect of this task laid on philosophers that Mr. H. D. Lewis has addressed himself, with clarity and vigour, in the book under review.

Now philosophers, it seems reasonable to hold, need not necessarily be worried when a theologian produces apparently naive or even irrational doctrines, since it is generally taken for granted that he is appealing to his own particular sources of knowledge, namely, revelation and authority. And though these sources have no attraction for philosophers as such, there is frequently a disposition to admit that they have some validity in the sphere of religion. Unfortunately, however, many of the fine-spun arguments of theologians have immense consequences for both metaphysics and morals, and it is when such arguments set out deliberately to challenge rational speculation, or to menace the foundations of morality, that philosophers are apt to register a sharp protest.

Certainly some philosophical correction seems called for in connection with the remarkable orgy of pessimism in which many theologians have been lately indulging. Thus Mr. Lewis quotes from the recent *Report of the Oxford Conference* where it is maintained that the war against evil in society represents a struggle "against a destructive principle in the universe itself, and against superhuman powers of evil," and that in this conflict, "we cannot in our own strength contend successfully against satanic powers." (p. 116). Even worse is the invitation to self-vilification which Mr. Lewis has noted in a book warmly commended in a Foreword by the Bishop of Hull (*Divine Judgment in Human History*, by D. R. Davies). Here all human endeavour is implied to be futile, and the claim is made that "whatever originates from the will of man remains self-destructive." (p. 117) "That crudities of this sort," comments Mr. Lewis, "so utterly lacking in historical or philosophical analysis, should have won for the writer a high place in the esteem of religious leaders and, as I understand, a large following among humbler ranks, is a sobering thought. It should give us pause before we assume that the theories which isolate religion from life will be slow to ally themselves effectively with the forces of reaction in the more democratic and liberal countries." (p. 118).

The chief offenders in Mr. Lewis's eyes, however, are the leading representatives of the "New Theology" such as Brunner, Barth, and Niebuhr. It is these theologians, with their apparently wide audiences, who wish to trample on reason, foist on man a sort of spiritual masochism and undermine the whole basis of ethics by insisting that "the freedom which we normally associate with the idea of obligation must be straight way identified with bondage to sin", that "all men are equally sinful" and that other no less distasteful paradoxes which play havoc with the deliverances of a normal conscience must be unreservedly accepted. But if they *are* accepted, then, says Mr. Lewis, "the very springs of individual responsibility are dried up in an apathetic surrender to oppressive doctrinal fictions" (pp. 70-71).

Thus Mr. Lewis's theme is that the "New Theology," in its desire to make a sensational appeal to those who have lost faith in reason, has tried to distort ethics for its own fell purposes, without realizing that it is cutting the ground from under its own feet—since it is *only* a theologically independent ethic that will provide the basis on which theology may build up its own superstructure. In short, Mr. Lewis is pleading for the autonomy of ethics, and for theologians to realize that "mature persons have a proper awareness of moral distinctions quite independently of their adoption of any religious faith." (p. 24).

So far as philosophers are concerned (with the possible exception of neo-Thomists), Mr. Lewis is talking to the converted; but perhaps some theologians—and especially those who jump into the philosophical arena without the necessary training and knowledge—will profit by his lessons, and be saved from themselves. Nevertheless, one feels that theologians are deserving of our sympathy, as well as our censure, due to a basic difficulty which has bedevilled so much theological argument and may well account, in part at least, for the present aberrations which Mr. Lewis has so ably castigated.

Briefly put, the difficulty is this. Encouraged by the apparent success of the Thomist synthesis, theologians have, understandably enough, tried to obtain the best of two worlds—the world of doctrinal orthodoxy, and the world of rational speculation—without realizing that the chasm between them cannot be bridged, that dogmas erected on primitive behaviour compulsions (to borrow a term from Dr. Thouless) cannot be rationalized and fitted into some coherent philosophical system. But—and here is the great

dilemma—if they were entirely to cease hankering after incompatibles and follow the path laid down for them by Scotus and (more particularly) Occam, if they were to withdraw all religious truths from the sphere of reason and rely on their own evidential guarantee of revelation mediated by authority (a policy that would at least be consistent and, if cautiously pursued, render them invulnerable to philosophical attack)—they would at once lose the support of more intelligent mortals who demand at least some rational basis for the dogmas they are asked to accept and who cannot follow Tertullian's (and Pascal's) advice to believe them *because* they are absurd. Unwilling, therefore, to relinquish the advantages of either world, theologians have incessantly fallen between two stools, and have earned the inevitable reward of those who cannot make up their minds to which side of human nature—the rational or irrational—they will appeal. Liberal Protestantism, putting its money more on the rational side, has sought to discard as much as possible of the more "anti-scientific" and mythological aspects of the cultus, in a desperate endeavour to attract intelligent minds back to the fold. But this appeasement has apparently not gone far enough—either because the hold of traditionalism is still too strong, or (what is more likely) because it is realized that too many concessions to modernist views will emasculate Christianity and reduce it to a mere lesson in morality. Hence it seems that, as a reaction against this well-intentioned if unsuccessful attempt to reconquer lost territory by sweet reason, the New Theologians have gone to the other extreme and appealed to man's irrational side, and in such a way as to offer a direct challenge to philosophy on its own ground. This has for some, we must suppose, a certain dynamic attraction: they feel that, with the approbation and encouragement of religious leaders, they may vindicate their right to treat reason with contempt. All credit, then, to Mr. Lewis for exposing some of these theologians' most palpable errors within the brief compass of 160 pages.

J. HARTLAND-SWANN

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*The Moral Sense.* By D. DAICHES RAPHAEL. (Oxford University Press: London; Geoffrey Cumberlege 1947. Pp. 201. Price 12s. 6d.)

This book is, in the words of its author, "concerned with the views of four eighteenth-century philosophers on the epistemology of morals" (p. 1). The writers selected for discussion, "as those of the British moralists who were most affected one way or the other by the empiricist theory of knowledge" (p. 2), are Hutcheson, Hume, Price and Reid. The author's interest is not solely historical. He is impressed with the degree to which the eighteenth-century controversy between the advocates of "sense" and "reason" in morals resembles the present-day debate between emotionalists and intuitionists; and it is from the standpoint of his own, intuitionist, position, briefly summarized in his concluding chapter, that he criticizes the views of the four writers mentioned.

Mr. Raphael's first chapter is largely concerned with pointing out that the "exercise of the moral faculty" does not resemble smelling, hearing and tasting in the ways in which smelling, tasting and hearing both (i) resemble one another (and touching and seeing) and (ii) differ from other types of experience. In this he is plainly right, but I do not know (nor does Mr. Raphael tell us) of any philosopher who held a "moral sense" theory which entailed a contrary view. To hold a "moral sense" theory is not to believe that moral qualities are sensible qualities.

Mr. Raphael then turns to Hutcheson, whom he charges, I think justly,

with defining the word "sense" so widely that it would be not incorrect to speak, say, of a "logical sense" (p. 19). He also charges him, I think unjustly, with confusing the *discernment* of rightness and the *motives* to it (p. 22); but surely the absence of a rigid distinction between them is no confusion on a view such as Hutcheson's, which might fairly be summarized in modern terms as the insistence that there occur disinterested desires and impulses ("benevolence") whose fulfilment (by the self or others) produces the feeling of approbation (of the self or others) and whose frustration induces the feeling of disapprobation (of the self or others). Mr. Raphael is clearly right, however, in saying that Hutcheson's main concern in the *Inquiry* is to refute the psychological egoist (p. 30). In his later *Illustrations on the Moral Sense* Hutcheson recognizes the existence of "rationalist ethics" and, against equating rightness with "conformity to reason" or "fittingness," takes the usual line that, while it is proper to speak of actions as being "fitting" in the sense "well adapted to achieve their end," the ultimate choice of ends, and the ultimate ground of approbation, must be *non-rational*. This calls forth a strong reaction from Mr. Raphael, who wants to base "ultimate approvals" on the rational intuition of a necessary connection between non-moral and moral (relational) characteristics. He complains that Hutcheson "never considers the possibility that reason may be a faculty of immediate apprehension" (p. 34); and adds that the fundamental moral relation (obligation, fittingness) is "logically entailed" by the situation in which it is manifested (p. 41).

Phrases such as these let us know where Mr. Raphael stands. Naturally, he is unmoved by Hume's arguments against reason as the source of moral judgments; and concludes that "Hume has not shown that in moral reasoning we . . . cannot start from self-evident axioms about goodness and obligation" (p. 71). He does more justice than some commentators have done to the subtleties of Hume's general analysis; and seems right in maintaining that Hume's account of obligation is unsatisfactory, though he does not give any valid reason for supposing that feeling-theories could not accommodate a unique, introspectible *feeling* of obligation. From this chapter on Hume, it is clear once again that the author rests his case against "feeling-theories" mainly on his belief that we know certain synthetic entailments concerning moral concepts (p. 84).

Turning from Hutcheson and Hume to Price and Reid, Mr. Raphael finds himself among philosophical allies, and, though he perhaps at times strains his author's meaning to stress the bonds of alliance, these two chapters are, on the whole, the best in the book. The work of Price is easily shown to contain striking anticipations of arguments and distinctions familiar to readers of Moore and Ross. Any definition of "right," for example, Price rejects on the ground that it is always significant to predicate the word of the proffered definition (p. 111). Price goes yet further in the desired (intuitionist) direction by claiming for rational intuition the function of perceiving universal and necessary truths. Yet Mr. Raphael finds his final arguments inconclusive and his theory "insufficiently worked out." Why did Price not clench the question by declaring that general moral principles are "apprehended by the understanding as necessarily true"? This final illumination was denied him, according to Mr. Raphael, because, lacking the modern "solution" of "prima facie obligations," he was daunted by the problem of conflicting duties and the consequent apparent lack of universality of ethical principles (pp. 144-5).

From the firm ground of ordinary language and common sense, Thomas Reid attacks both the theorists of feeling and the extremes of rationalist ethics. Mr. Raphael presents this part of his case with admirable clarity;

though he might have made it plainer that Reid, in defending a "reasoned" choice of ends as well as of means, was not drawing attention to any facts which Hume had overlooked. His main criticism of Reid is that he fails to maintain consistently the epistemological distinction between the necessary axioms (general truths) of morality, and the particular judgments of "instantiation" of moral characteristics (p. 173); and consequently fails to arrive at Mr. Raphael's distinction between the act of rational intuition by which we apprehend the former, and the particular moral judgment which, while presupposing the apprehension of the relevant general truth, does not generally involve any explicit reference to it unless the particular judgment itself comes to be questioned (pp. 189-93).

The theory of moral judgment of which the outlines emerge from Mr. Raphael's criticism of his four chosen philosophers is all too briefly summarized in the concluding chapter. The fundamental moral concept is taken to be that of obligation (an unanalysable relation); and Mr. Raphael makes great, but not (for me) very illuminating use of the familiar distinction between a "prima facie obligation" (which I shall write "obligation") and a duty proper or actual obligation (which I shall write "Obligation"). One would have thought that "prima facie obligation" (obligation) would be definable in terms of "obligation" (Obligation), and that some knowledge of the latter would be the pre-condition of any knowledge of the former. For Mr. Raphael the converse is the case, at least as regards knowledge. I know I have an Obligation to do X only if I know both that I have an obligation to do X and that this is my only or preponderant obligation. I judge that I have an obligation to do X only if I see (intuit) now or have previously seen (intuit) that the existence of circumstances of such-and-such a kind entails the existence of an obligation of this kind. From circumstances I can (deductively) infer obligations; and from obligations I can infer Obligations (deductively if there is only one obligation, inductively if there are more). And this is the only way in which I can come to know either obligations or Obligations; for these are "consequential relations" (derivative concepts), not to be known except as synthetically entailed by other characteristics. Mr. Raphael modifies the fabulous intellectualism of this account by allowing that ordinary particular moral judgments generally involve, not explicit intuitions of entailment, but an unreflective "taking for granted" that, say, an action is Obligatory as falling under a previously intuited rule about the obligatoriness of actions of that type. Habit helps us to make the transition from circumstances to Obligations without the mediating intuitions. But the intuitions must have occurred at one time, as the pre-conditions of moral judgment, as the foundations of the habit. (It is not quite clear whether they are also the pre-condition of moral emotion.)

The objections, both of a general and of a detailed nature, to this account, seem to me overwhelming. It commits the prima facie absurdity of making the concept of "obligation" derivative from that of "prima facie obligation" instead of conversely—an absurdity perhaps always implicit in this deceptively "helpful" notion. It raises for Mr. Raphael the problem of how we know, in the case of conflict, which of our obligations is our Obligation; a problem which he conspicuously fails to solve by the suggestion that we know it by induction. I could, in a given case, pick out my Obligation from my conflicting obligations inductively, only if there had occurred other cases of conflicting obligations in which I had known my Obligation independently of my knowledge of my obligations. But, in the first place, this would be an instance of a non-inductive picking out of an Obligation from conflicting obligations; and, in the second place, this hypothesis contradicts Mr. Raphael's

## NEW BOOKS

thesis that knowledge of Obligations is always mediated or preceded by the intuition of obligations as entailed by circumstances.

Both critics and defenders of intuitionism in morals, however, will find Mr. Raphael's attempt to solve the "epistemological problem" instructive. Nor do the interest and stimulus of his book depend upon this attempt alone, but owe most to the care and skill which Mr. Raphael gives to the detailed presentation and criticism of his authors' arguments and points of view. To these features of the book I have not been able to do anything approaching justice in a short notice.

P. F. STRAWSON.

*Causation and the Foundations of Science.* By J. O. WISDOM. (Hermann & Co., Paris, 1946. Pp. 54.)

This work is interesting as an attempt to find a *via media* in regard to causation between the empiricism of the regularity view and thorough-going rationalism and also for its discussion of the possible philosophical bearings of the principle of indeterminacy. The author is not satisfied with the fashionable empiricism which reduces causality to regular sequence, but insists on the need for necessity. The strongest argument against the former view is, he thinks, that on such a view "the cause has no bearing on the production of the effect, since the regular recurrence has a merely *de facto* basis. Thus when hydrogen and oxygen are united by a spark, the proportions of the gases and the spark contribute in no way to the fact that they lose their independent existence and are succeeded by water. The action of a cause has" [on the regularity view] "to be thought of as *an action that does nothing*" (p. 41). Dr. Wisdom is also influenced by the difficulty of defending induction on the regularity view, but he failed to make it clear how this difficulty is to be met on his own view. Fundamental for him is the distinction between *macroscopic* and *microscopic* causation, the regularity view being true of the former but not of the latter. He is a believer in causal necessity but he refuses to regard this as involving logical necessity. The difficulty about that in my mind is to arrive at any clear conception of a necessity that is not logical or at the very least to avoid admitting features which make it so analogous to logical necessity that an important truth is expressed by calling it "entailment," and I cannot say that the account given has helped here. But in other respects it is very interesting and suggestive especially in the criticism of the rival regularity and entailment views and the use of the distinction between microscopic and macroscopic. The length of the work is naturally not sufficient to deal adequately with the very thorny and complicated problem of induction. The account of the philosophical bearings of the indeterminacy principle is very interesting and the analysis of the relevant points given is highly instructive. The author, however, seems to waver somewhat on this point so that it is difficult to obtain a consistent view of his account. Sometimes it would seem that he regards the principle as very relevant, sometimes as largely irrelevant to philosophy.

Dr. Wisdom has produced a very interesting and stimulating little manual, the 54 pages of which are crammed with material. The work must also have an interesting history, though this is only alluded to very briefly at the end. It was printed and published in France; and the proofs having been corrected in 1940, the type remained in being in Paris all through the occupation (apparently undisturbed to bear its belated fruit now (subject to a few alterations). However this circumstance can hardly excuse the large number of minor misprints. The book could with profit be read both by elementary and advanced students of the subject.

A. C. EWING.

## PHILOSOPHY

*The Categorical Imperative: A Study in Kant's Moral Philosophy.* By H. J. PATON, F.B.A. (Hutchinson's University Library. London. 1947. Pp. 283. Price 21s.)

This book, I must say at once, is a contribution of the greatest importance to the understanding of Kant's ethics, and is certainly the best and fairest account I have read of the subject. It will not appeal to those who prefer to regard Kant as a man of straw in overthrowing whom they may display a facile dialectical skill; but without any unfair whitewashing it provides an admirable exposition and defence of the main principles of the *Foundations of the Metaphysic of Morals* and of the ethical as distinct from the theological part of the *Critique of Practical Reason*. It certainly does for these works what Kant's *Metaphysics of Experience* by the same author did for the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and helped by a less intractable subject-matter it surpasses Prof. Paton's former book in terseness and lucidity, while not inferior to it in power of thought and judicial balance.

The main stock criticisms directed against Kant's ethics are largely due to its very formal character, but, Prof. Paton insists, we cannot blame Kant here for being too formal, because he was just concerned here with the form of ethical judgments, and not with the matter, which he leaves to the *Metaphysic of Ethics*. We cannot blame Kant for studying the form even if we happen not to be interested in it ourselves, and we must remember that he has also written a book in which he deals with the non-formal aspects of ethics. Prof. Paton vigorously and very rightly opposes the interpretations according to which Kant's ethics is vitiated by taking no account of consequences. "Kant makes it clear that there is no question of deducing particular duties merely from the empty form of universal law. On the contrary, we have to consider the *matter* which has to be fitted into this empty form. The matter consists of our ordinary material maxims based on inclination for definite objects, and what we have to do is to accept or reject these maxims by the principle of universality."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, he rejects the interpretation according to which Kant is supposed to have held that no actions which accord with our desires could have moral worth.<sup>2</sup> And he ably defends Kant's doctrine that the good will and the good will alone has unconditional value, while leaving some conditional value for other parts of our nature. He leaves in the reader's mind a kindlier and humaner picture than has been fashionable of Kant's ethics, and incidentally of Kant's personality.<sup>3</sup>

The most widely known feature of Kant's ethical doctrine is perhaps his conception of moral laws as strictly universal and his use of this conception as a criterion of what is right. Prof. Paton dispels the idea that this is more than a negative criterion, failure to comply with which makes an action wrong.<sup>4</sup> Any action which complies with it, he thinks, Kant would have regarded as permissible, thus leaving scope for a decision according to our desires provided we did not transgress the assigned limits. But he lays most stress on the sense in which universality is implied by any rational ethical judgment, i.e. if it is right at one time or for one man, it must under the same conditions be right at any time and for any man. The principle will seem to some too formal to be of any value, but it is yet presupposed in the most simple ethical reasoning from one case to another (c.f. science and the uniformity of nature), so Paton does right to emphasize it; but he should, I think, have also given a thorough discussion of the less defensible sense of universality in ethics which led Kant to maintain that it was wrong to tell a lie even in order to mislead a would-be murderer. His views of universality

<sup>1</sup> P. 73

<sup>2</sup> Chap. III.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 197-8

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 141-2.

as a criterion are summed up as follows: "Kant's solution is that the actions which can and ought to be willed in obedience to moral law are those whose maxims, if conceived as a law of nature, would further a systematic harmony of purposes among men, or at least would do nothing to destroy such a systematic harmony. . . . Indeed it may well be doubted whether it is possible to work out a systematic moral philosophy on any other basis, even although we may hold that Kant's own attempt to work it out is in many respects faulty."<sup>1</sup> Prof. Paton, to me very surprisingly, insists that Kant made the good prior to the ought, not vice versa.<sup>2</sup> I think this interpretation requires much more justification than is given.

The most difficult part of Kant's ethics is his discussion of the connection between moral obligation and freedom and his half-hearted attempt to justify ethics by an argument from outside. Prof. Paton rejects the latter argument and holds that by the time he wrote the *Critique of Practical Reason* Kant had reached the view that the moral law must be accepted as an object of immediate insight.<sup>3</sup> But he draws an illuminating parallel between theoretical and ethical knowledge which perhaps expresses what was predominant in Kant's thought when he discussed these topics. If we are to think rationally, our thought must be determined not just by previous events but by timeless logical principles, and similarly if we are to act rationally in the full sense—which for Kant means acting morally—our action must be determined by a timeless moral law, and not by the natural causation which connects it with earlier events.<sup>4</sup> This, Prof. Paton insists, does not prove ethics or freedom, but it helps us towards accepting our moral insight as we accept our theoretical insight. He thinks that Kant should have stopped here with a timeless law and not introduced the nation of timeless acts on our part, a view with which most readers will no doubt agree. While his account deals admirably with most of the subtleties involved, I must confess that on two points I feel dissatisfied: 1. his discussion of the antithesis between analytic and synthetic propositions; 2. the rather too cursory way in which he deals with Kant's identification of free and moral action, which presents perhaps the acutest and most long standing problem in the whole of Kantian ethics.

I conclude by mentioning two omissions. It seems to me that in the present climate of thought the book would have been more useful if it had brought out more the exact nature of the opposition between Kant's view and the views which are nowadays expounded under the headings of naturalism and subjectivism. In this connection it is unfortunate that the author seems to commit the mistake of assuming that any naturalist view must reduce moral judgments to judgments about pleasure and pain.<sup>5</sup> Secondly, I am surprised that he makes no apparent use of Kant's published *Lectures on Ethics*. No doubt he has read the work but there are no references to it, and though he might say that it is concerned rather with applied ethics than with the form of ethics it is difficult to believe that no citations from it would have been helpful. But in any case we may congratulate Prof. Paton on his excellent book and recommend it very heartily as essential to all serious students of Kant's ethics.

A. C. EWING.

<sup>1</sup> P. 163.

<sup>2</sup> P. 104.

<sup>3</sup> P. 203

<sup>4</sup> P. 217 ff

<sup>5</sup> P. 20.

*Language, Truth and Logic.* By A. J. AYER. (London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd. 1946. Pp. 160. Price 9s.)

This book, first published in 1936, is now issued in more austere form, with no alteration of text, but with a new introduction of 21 pages, in which Mr. Ayer discusses some questions arising out of his views, and notes some changes



## PHILOSOPHY

in his views during the interval. The two main topics he deals with in this introduction are the principle of verification, and the nature of philosophical analysis; and there are briefer notes on *a priori* propositions, on propositions about the past and about other minds, and on the emotive theory of values.

Most of his discussion of the principle of verification is concerned with technical details designed to improve the exposition of the argument and the expression of the principle itself, but he now makes it clear that he does not expect it to be accepted as a self-evident proposition about the only possible conditions under which any statement could be said to have meaning. He now describes it as a definition of one proper use of the word "meaning"; and even if metaphysical statements have no meaning in this sense, he no longer expects metaphysicians to admit straightway that what they are saying is altogether senseless. "Although," he says, "I should still defend the criterion of verifiability as a methodological principle, I realize that for the effective elimination of metaphysics it needs to be supported by detailed analyses of particular metaphysical arguments" (p. 16).

I should prefer to express what Mr. Ayer is now saying by describing the principle of verifiability not as a proposition but as a proposal; as an attempt to persuade investigators who wish their work to be fruitful, to consider only certain types of statement and not waste time on other types. Proposals can be argued for or against, though they cannot be shown to be true or false. Proposals do not invalidate propositions, though if you can get people to accept certain proposals you can get them to reject certain arguments. And this it seems to me is all that can be hoped for from the principle of verifiability.

It should be noted that, as Mr. Ayer expressed it, the principle of verifiability did not result in an explicit definition of the meaning of a statement, but merely showed under what conditions a statement could be said to have meaning. A statement has meaning (of the approved kind) only if it is capable of being verified or falsified by a procedure of a particular kind. This does *not*, so far, identify the meaning of a statement with the procedure for its verification. It leaves open the question of how the meaning of a statement is to be determined. The methods of determining whether it is true or not that there is a chair in the next room are not, so far, regarded as furnishing an account of what it means to say that there is a chair in the room. A distinction is still left possible between the conditions which must be satisfied if a statement is to have meaning, and the procedure for determining what the meaning of the statement is.

This latter procedure was indicated in Mr. Ayer's account of the nature of philosophical analysis. In the text of 1936 this account resulted in a very close connexion being made between the conditions necessary for a statement to have meaning and the procedure for determining that meaning. The new account of philosophical analysis seems to make this connexion much less close. In 1936 he held that it was the function of philosophical analysis to show how statements containing certain types of expression can be replaced by equivalent statements not containing these types of expression; to show, e.g. that statements about material objects, such as tables, trees, etc., could be replaced by equivalent statements containing no reference to such material objects, but referring only to actual or possible observations. He expressed this by saying that "the philosopher is primarily concerned with the provision, not of *explicit* definitions, but of definitions *in use*" (p. 60). The effect of this account was that the meaning of statements about material objects would be expressible entirely in terms of actual or possible verificatory statements. He would now prefer to speak not of replacing statements of one sort by *equivalent*

## NEW BOOKS

statements of another sort, but rather of showing how the statements of one sort are *related* to statements of another sort.

This is a significant difference; as is indicated by the fact that he now thinks that it is impossible to define what we mean by the phrase "a material thing" in terms of observation statements. "What one can do, however, is to construct a scheme which shows what sort of relations must hold between sense contents for it to be true, in any case, that a material thing exists" (24).

It would be possible to take this new account as indicating a move away from phenomenalism. The new account would prevent anyone from saying that material things are nothing but sets of sense-contents, or that making statements referring to material objects is only a compendious way of making statements about actual or possible sense-experiences. To say that a material thing exists would be to say something different from what can be said by speaking about sense-experiences. The latter would be evidence for the former, but not part of its meaning. Thus the new account of the nature of philosophical analysis would justify and exploit the gap left in the statement of the principle of verification between the conditions under which a statement can be said to have meaning and the determination of that meaning.

There is, however, a paragraph on pp. 14-15 with a contrary tendency. In this paragraph Mr. Ayer does make it clear that he thinks that the principle of verification allows us, in our theories, to introduce terms which do not "designate something observable." He insists that statements which confirm a hypothesis need not be part of the meaning of the hypothesis. While this is so, however, he holds that it is a necessary consequence of the principle of verification that a statement "does not have any other factual meaning than what is contained in at least some of the relevant empirical propositions" (p. 15). In the case of a statement about a material thing, "although its generality may prevent any finite set of observation-statements from exhausting its meaning, it does not contain anything as part of its meaning that cannot be represented as an observation-statement" (p. 15).

It is true that in this paragraph it is Mr. Ayer's primary intention to make clear that not all the evidence for a statement is part of the meaning of the statement. But it seems to result from the paragraph that there can be no part of the factual meaning of a statement which "cannot be represented as an observation statement." And this seems to be different from what he said in the passage already quoted from p. 24. While not necessarily inconsistent with that passage, it considerably diminishes the significance I suggested that passage might have. There is at least a certain tension between the two passages. They pull in opposite directions.

This tension seems to be evidenced by Mr. Ayer's discussion of other minds, brief as it is. He accepts the evidence of linguistic usage as decisive for the conclusion that it is a necessary proposition that two persons do not own the same experience. If this is so, then the statement "P is owning experience E" would have to mean something different from any set of observation-statements capable of being made by persons other than P, if they were to be able to make it at all. One half of Mr. Ayer's doctrine as I have presented it would allow for such difference, while leaving it possible that the observation-statements could be confirmatory evidence justifying them in making the statement about P. The other half of his doctrine would rule out any possible difference, and would thus make it meaningless for anyone to say that another person was owning an experience. In the conclusion he reaches tentatively the latter half seems to prevail. "I am inclined," he concludes, "to revert to a 'behaviouristic' interpretation of propositions about other people's experiences." "But," he adds, "I own that it has an air of paradox, which prevents

## PHILOSOPHY

me from being wholly confident that it is true" (p. 20), which seems to show that the former half of his doctrine is not completely forgotten.

But this kind of tension is a good augury for future progress.

I have no space to discuss the remaining points in the introduction. The re-issue of the volume is to be welcomed, and the new introduction enables Mr. Ayer to pick up the threads of the argument as they were left before the war, and tidy them up in the process. What was noteworthy before was the vigour with which the doctrines were expressed, the swiftness and economy of the writing, the sureness with which Mr. Ayer could pack his sentences with content, without making them unwieldy. The new introduction shows that while Mr. Ayer has matured, he has lost none of his old skill.

L. J. RUSSELL.

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*Leviathan or the Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth, Ecclesiasticall and Civil.* By THOMAS HOBBS. Edited with an introduction by MICHAEL OAKESHOTT. (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1946. Price 8s. 6d. (cloth), 7s. 6d. (paper).)

Hobbes's "opponents divide themselves into two classes; the emotional and the intellectual," says Mr. Michael Oakeshott in his introduction (p. i) to this fine edition of the *Leviathan*. The present reviewer must confess himself to belong to the first class, although he has tried hard to graduate into the second. It is not an exaggeration to say, however, that Mr. Oakeshott's introduction has enabled one to make what is almost completely a fresh start in trying to understand Hobbes. In about seventy pages of lucid, arresting, and epigrammatic English he has expounded the essential facts of Hobbes's life, the context of the *Leviathan*, the characteristics of Hobbes's thought, and the argument of his book. There is a freshness about the whole thing which enables the reader coming to the *Leviathan* again to enter with enthusiasm and a sense of direction upon the task of following and appreciating the long and difficult argument of the author. And perhaps the greatest tribute to Mr. Oakeshott's introduction is that it leads one on to the reading of the book; it does not give that false sense of knowing already what is to come, which is so often the effect of introductions. "The argument is finished: but let no one mistake it for the book," says Mr. Oakeshott at the end of one section of his introduction. It is good to be able to say that at no time does the introduction produce that false impression and result. It succeeds admirably in what it sets out to do—it introduces.

To say this is to say that Mr. Oakeshott has achieved his purpose brilliantly. He may hope to do a little more—to meet the criticisms of the opponents of the second class, and to make some amends for the fact that Hobbes's few defenders are, as he says, "not conspicuous for their insight into his meaning." But this is harder work, and it is difficult to attempt it in the few pages of an introduction. And, to quote his own words once more, "it is not to be expected that it can be accomplished quickly or all at once." (p. lii). What Mr. Oakeshott has to say in defence of Hobbes is always cogent and clear. It will lead the student to see that there is much more in Hobbes than he thought. Whether it will take him further than that, whether it will lead him to exclaim as Mr. Oakeshott does (p. viii) that "the *Leviathan* is the greatest, perhaps the sole, masterpiece of political philosophy written in the English language" is less certain. Let us hope that before he takes a final decision on this question the student will look at two companion volumes in this series of Mr. Blackwell's political texts—Mr. Gough's edition of Locke's *Second Treatise* and *A Letter concerning Toleration*, and Mr.

## NEW BOOKS

McCallum's edition of Mill's *Liberty and Representative Government*. May the reviewer be permitted to go beyond the confines of the volume he is considering and offer a word of thanks and appreciation to Mr. McCallum and his colleague as general editor of this series, Mr. C. H. Wilson, and to Basil Blackwell for their courage and enterprise in making available to students these great texts, so fit for these times. Mr. Oakeshott's volume sets the highest of standards.

K. C. WHEARE.

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*Between Man and Man*. By MARTIN BUBER. Translated by Ronald Gregor Smith. (Kegan Paul. 1947. Pp. 208. 12s. 6d.)

Martin Buber's *I and Thou* was published in Germany in 1923 (English translation 1937). *Between Man and Man* contains five subsequent essays, written 1925-38, which develop the same leading thoughts into fuller expression, hearing more distinctly on contemporary problems. To appreciate this volume a reader need not be acquainted with the earlier work; and in many respects the fuller treatment provides an easier introduction to the subject, in spite of the greater proportion here of technical and historical discussions of philosophy.

"Dialogue" (*Zwiesprache*), which stands first in the book, comes nearest to *I and Thou* in its compressed and mystical language. It is a study of the heart that is "open" to all things and events, and to men, and to God; and that meets the "word" said to it everywhere in return. The next essay, "The Question to the Single One" (*Die Frage an den Einzelnen*) contains a sympathetic but critical exposition of Kierkegaard and a more decided criticism of some related writers; and this historical survey is enlarged and extended (ranging now from Kant to Scheler) in the final section of the book. This section, "What is Man?", consists of the author's inaugural course of lectures (1938) as Professor of Social Philosophy in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. It is preceded by two addresses on education given to conferences of teachers; one in 1925 at Heidelberg, the other in 1939 at Tel-Aviv.

It is impressive to see how well the general doctrine bears expansion; and Professor Buber's gift of illustration, and his subtlety and sanity of thought, appear still more clearly now that more space is allowed them. Mr. Gregor Smith's translation (so far as I can judge without having seen the original) seems altogether admirable, and the author and translator together supply us with some memorable passages.

A few quotations may help most to give an idea of what the book offers.

"Kant's question *What is man?* whose history and effects I have discussed . . . can never be answered on the basis of a consideration of the human person as such, but (so far as an answer is possible at all) only on the basis of a consideration of it in the wholeness of its essential relations to what is. Only the man who realizes in his whole life with his whole being the relations possible to him helps us to know man truly. And since, as we have seen, the depths of the question about man's being are revealed only to the man who has become solitary, the way to the answer lies through the man who overcomes his solitude without forfeiting its questioning power" (p. 199).

"Individualism understands only a part of man, collectivism understands man only as a part; neither advances to the wholeness of man, to man as a whole. . . . With the former man's face is distorted, with the latter it is masked" (p. 200).

"The hody politic, which is sometimes also called the 'world,' that is, the human world, seeks, knowingly or unknowingly, to realize in its genuine formations men's turning to one another in the context of creation. The false

## PHILOSOPHY

formations distort but they cannot eliminate the eternal origin. Kierkegaard in his horror of malformation turns away" (p. 60).

"Kierkegaard behaves in our sight like a schizophrenist, who tries to win over the beloved individual into 'his' world as if it were the true one. But it is not the true one. We, ourselves wandering on the narrow ridge, must not shrink from the sight of the jutting rock on which he stands over the abyss; nor may we step on it. We have much to learn from him, but not the final lesson" (p. 55).

"Good and evil, then, cannot be a pair of opposites like right and left or above and beneath. 'Good' is the movement in the direction of home, 'evil' is the aimless whirl of human potentialities without which nothing can be achieved and by which, if they take no direction but remain trapped in themselves, everything goes awry. . . . As a condition of the individual soul is the convulsive shirking of direction, of the total orientation of the soul by which it stands up to personal responsibility before God. . . . The passionate man refuses by his passion, the indolent man by his indolence. . . . The real historical daemons are the exploiting by historical powers of this shirking" (pp. 78-9).

"Lyric poetry is . . . the tremendous refusal of the soul to be satisfied with self-commerce. Poetry is the soul's announcement that even when it is alone with itself on the narrowest ridge it is thinking not of itself but of the Being which is not itself, and that this Being which is not itself is visiting it there, perplexing and blessing it" (p. 180).

"In my thoughts about the life of dialogue I have had to choose the examples as 'purely' and as much in the form of paradigm as memory presented them to me in order to make myself intelligible. . . . But I am not concerned with the pure, I am concerned with the turbid, the repressed, the pedestrian, with toil and dull contrariness . . . in which the man, whom I pluck at random out of the tumult, is living and out of which he can and at times does break through. Whither? into nothing exalted, heroic, or holy, into no Either and no Or, only into this tiny strictness and grace of every day, where I have to do with just the very same 'reality' with whose duty and business I am taken up. . . . And now, in all the clanking of routine that I called my reality, there appears to me, homely and glorious, the effective reality, creaturely and given to me in trust and responsibility. We do not find meaning lying in things nor do we put it into things, but between us and things it can happen" (pp. 35-6).

HELEN WODEHOUSE.

*The Second Treatise on Civil Government and A Letter concerning Toleration.*

By JOHN LOCKE Edited with an Introduction by J. W. GOUGH.  
(Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1946. Pp. xxxix + 165. 8s. 6d. net.)

Mr. Gough has given us an excellent edition of a political classic which a generation familiar with totalitarianism in practice should esteem more highly than the complacent later nineteenth century. For to that generation in England Locke was too often a solemn propounder of commonplaces and shallow half-truths, who had had in the eighteenth century far more than his due measure of reputation as a political thinker and whom it was meet to contrast to his disadvantage with the "far more coherent logic" (the phrase is Bosanquet's) and the far more brilliant writing of Hobbes. Nowadays perhaps we are not too much impressed by a political logic that leads straight to despotism, and we merely regret that such a pungent style was put at the service of so disastrous a doctrine as Hobbes expounded.

With Locke at least we are safe—and sound as well as safe. He is whole-

some even in his hesitations, and when he evades an issue (as that of the limits of toleration) it is often because he refuses to slash drastically through a knot that no one has to this day unravelled. Perhaps it is just as well that some (not all) of the fundamentals of liberal democracy should have been first authoritatively stated with so little sparkle of paradox, but soberly, tentatively, unpontifically.

Mr. Gough's estimate of Locke is likewise sober. He shows us his weaknesses as well as his merits. He brings out well the special significance of Locke's conception of government in *fiduciary* rather than traditional contractual terms. The reader has also the great advantage of seeing where the later editions of the *Treatise*, which Locke preferred, differ from the first version of it. But on the whole one is struck by the constancy of Locke's ideas. As Mr. Gough points out the essence of the doctrine of 1690 is in the early draft of the "Essay Concerning Toleration" of 1667.

There appears to be a slip on p. xxxv. Speaking of Locke's not very satisfactory discussion of the problem of how the citizen is to act if the civil government enjoins something that conflicts with his conscience, Mr. Gough says: "Locke simply recommends passive obedience," when it is clear that passive disobedience is intended. The citizen should refuse to obey, but accept the duly authorized punishment for disobedience. After 250 years we have not got far beyond that.

One question which must occur to the readers of Locke remains unanswered by his latest editor. Why does Locke never refer openly to Hobbes? That he has the doctrine of *The Leviathan* repeatedly in mind is, as Mr. Gough says, clear enough. Why then no overt reference to it?

If this curious reticence is to be explained by a decision not to present his own constructive theory in a way that would suggest a piece of topical polemics, then he succeeded to perfection in writing what within a generation had become the standing and accepted exposition of the Whig political faith.

I should like to quarrel with one of Mr. Gough's critical comments. He complains (xxx) of the "artificiality" of Locke's theory. Certainly Locke had, no more than any of his contemporaries, a conception of social or political evolution or growth. But he does recognize that constitutional government is at any rate "natural" in the sense of being an expression of human need finding its normal expression in the satisfaction of natural faculty. Ordered government is after all an artifice: the important thing to stress is that it is not a violent *tour de force* for which nothing in raw human nature would have prepared us, but an inevitable contrivance in which human nature finds itself. "Man is born free as he is born rational," etc. Burke was at any rate faithful to Locke's thought when he wrote that "Art is man's nature."

J. W. HARVEY.

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*The Nature of Art or The Shield of Pallas.* By ARTHUR LITTLE, S. J. (Longmans Green & Co Pp. 264. 8s. 6d.)

It is an intriguing experience, chastening and perhaps salutary, to read a book with whose main conclusion on the nature of artistic experience (though not on the nature of beauty) one agrees while finding none of its arguments for that conclusion at all convincing. This main conclusion is that our experience of significant art is the contemplation of the volitional activities of the human soul (p. 75), it is "emotion recollected in tranquillity" (p. 83).

The main arguments are of the kind once profanely called "high priori." As Lord Russell has said of the vaunted French "logicality," it develops with

impressive demonstration the implications of premises merely assumed to be acceptable. To take a crucial instance: the beauty of significant art consists in its expressiveness of the emotions of the human soul. But this is referred to the alleged fact that the human soul is the most "beautiful" object with which we are directly acquainted. Everything that is real is said to be beautiful (though human beings are incapable of perceiving the beauty of most things) since everything real is orderly or self-consistent, and such order is beauty. Surely the force of reason could no further go. To make things such she just defined them so. From this it follows that the beauty of significant art is a very different kind of beauty from that of reality, for its beauty consists in its expressiveness of the imperceptible and inexpressive beauty of reality. But what is expressive or significant to one man may easily not be so to another who speaks a different language and has a different culture or a different coloured skin (pp. 126, 150). Yet all beauty is said to be objective, a quality of things not an experience of ours. Manifestly here is a difficulty calling for serious discussion: is the beauty of art a quality of the work or only a capacity to stimulate a valuable activity (acquaintance with the human heart) in people of a certain character, while one equally valuable might only be stimulated in others by other means? And if the latter, may not the same be true of all beauty, say (to take the author's example) that of an amphora? May not its curves be expressive of human feeling to some persons who are insensitive to those of a Chinese bronze, and *vice versa*? No doubt when we call things beautiful we unreflectively mean to attribute a quality to them, as when we call them pleasant, but are we justified? This real difficulty is passed over with surprising levity. We are referred to "the devastating criticism" of subjectivism in ethics in Dr C. E. M. Joad's *Guide to Philosophy*. There is no discussion of the contrary opinions of Richard Price, Coleridge, Rashdall, Ross or of Croce whose account of beauty agrees so closely with the account of "significant art" for which the author claims originality. Indeed, in spite of the claim upon the wrapper that "all the main theories are outlined and debated," the only one adequately discussed is that of Marett; Kant is touched but, I think, misinterpreted. There is no discussion of whether the value of aesthetic experience—goodness of taste—may not depend upon its frequency, vividness and purity rather than upon the stimulus; as innocence and peace of mind depend upon having done what we honestly thought our duty in what we supposed to be the situation and not upon what we ignorantly did.

When the author discusses the "insignificant beauty" of an amphora (and I suppose the same would apply to nature) we are told that its beauty is objective, consisting in the mutual necessitation of its lines. But since the alleged necessitation is neither causal nor logical it must, I suppose, be aesthetic; there must be these curves if this particular beauty is to be achieved: the argument, once more, is circular.

The sub-title is explained by a rather obscure apologue of Perseus. The author has not remarked upon the striking resemblance, as well as difference, of his conclusions with those of Ruskin's *The Lance of Pallas*.

The book is developed from lectures; some pedagogical puns and facetiousness, suitable enough for its first purpose, might perhaps have been dropped.

The definition attributed to Blackstone on p. 48 is in fact quoted by him from Sir Thomas Smith some two centuries earlier.

The main effect of the book is that by its insistence on the "objectivity" of beauty, which seems to me extremely dubious, it tends to revive, as in logical positivism, the analogy between beauty and goodness drawn by Hutcheson and Hume, which has led alike to an unfounded scepticism of morality and to an unjustifiable dogmatism in taste.

E. F. CARRITT.

## NEW BOOKS

*God, Man, and the Absolute.* By F. H. CLEOBURY, Ph.D. (Hutchinson. Pp. 148. Price 15s.)

Bertrand Russell has said that perhaps the chief service of philosophy today is to enable us to live effectively without certainty. That may rather be the function of faith—not confined to philosophers. But one service it does render is to prevent us taking the latest cult in thought for the last and ascribing finality to a contemporary fashion. Thought has its dialectical movement, in which by putting down the right foot and then again the left, it maintains constant motion if not assured progress. Our own day has put down the mighty Rationalisms and Idealisms of the nineteenth century from their seats and exalted various schools of Realism and Irrationalism to high degree. "Whirl" has become king in the realms of art, poetry, life, and thought. Lately, however, tender shoots have appeared which may be the presage of a returning Spring for ancient Reason and that "out-moded" Idealism which once availed to nourish spiritual faith and social enthusiasm with Hegelian juices particularly in Oxford and Glasgow.

Many may get from the very title of this book by Dr. Cleobury a creepy feeling that Hegel and his English prophets, long believed to be dead and buried, are again walking and speaking like gibbering ghosts in their unknown tongue, and they may think that anything which can now be said from that platform must be flat, stale, and unprofitable. In the present instance such a prejudice would itself be batty. True it is Hegel, Bradley, and Bosanquet who walk the ramparts; but Dr. Cleobury views the apparition with eyes in which there is speculation and alert critical faculty. Besides, a philosophy like a wine may be none the worse, if it is freshly decanted, for having lain a generation or two in the cellar so that the bottles smell musty and look cobwebby. Why prefer to sport with Minerva on raw spirit distilled earlier the same day? Dr. Cleobury informs us that this book is "the result of a conviction that the time is now ripe for a re-consideration and defence of the outmoded Oxford Idealism," and his enterprise should command the wistful interest of philosophers and thinking people at a time when Scientific Humanism and Logical Positivism are contracting the whole alphabet of cosmic utterance within the alpha and omega of time, ending, as they must, in nihilism redeemed only by the stoic dignity with which final despair is to be defied.

He reaffirms, supported by revised arguments, the cardinal theses and principles of Absolute Idealism, holding that Reality is experience and that "the notion of an existent or a subsistent or a real which no one, God or man, is conscious of" is one to which he can attach no meaning (p. 10). As all the motley of existence is not relative to finite perception it must be present in an Infinite or Absolute experience and to the *explicit cognisance* of God, (p. 13) who has no subconscious. Absolute Reality is one eternal, all-embracing, perfect, and harmonious Whole, a rational, systematic, self-consistent Unity, into which all phenomena enter, including finite selves, and of which they are parts, and nothing can fall outside it (p. 15).

The succeeding chapters offer a closely reasoned theory, based on acute and penetrating analysis, of *Finite Selfhood*, of the *Moral Consciousness*, *Human Freedom*, *Error and Appearance*, with a discussion in the last Chapter of the main doctrines of Christian theology such as Incarnation, Sin, Responsibility—a treatment designed to show how the integrity of all our temporal values and particularities can be preserved in the Idealistic conception of the Absolute as here interpreted and expounded. In Bradley's Absolute all "appearances" are transmuted so that their peculiar "as suchness" in time and space disappears in the total context. In Dr. Cleobury's Absolute every



characteristic of phenomena is there; it remains, as such, a constituent of the Absolute. The dilemma is that with Bradley the finite peculiarities cannot squeeze in without losing their shape and so wander like displaced persons in an inconceivable limbo, while with Cleobury the network of completed relations in the Absolute leaves the particular "appearances" intact. This, though necessary if nothing whatever is to be left outside, seems impossible on the Idealistic theory of things and relations. Cleobury wrestles with the problem and seeks its solution in a special handling of that hardy principle of the Idealistic Logic, "Identity-in-Difference." Selfhood is of course the most obstinate stickler for its own inviolable rights and here he manfully tries to wangle out of the hunker by his doctrine of the "concrete ego" (p. 31), which he illustrates by the analogy of a circle with its centre, area, circumference (34, 36). But does the analogy do its job, where the centre is just an abstract part of the circle, in the same plane with it, whereas the ego is a living agent *appropriating* its experience like a trade-union imposing a "closed shop"? And moreover we find in Chapter II, and in Chapter IV, where human freedom is the issue, that the ego is assigned a transcendental character and status above the general process of nature, history and its own experience, where causality and determinism reigns (p. 144). This point is crucial, in our opinion, and we cannot see, in spite of the elaborate argument of Chapter II, that the "separateness" of finite selves from each other and from the divine spirit is expressible in terms of "dissimilarity of content" merely (p. 144), and "similarity of content" is not the same thing as numerical identity. I enjoy an unfringed monopoly of my own toothache.

Space makes it impossible to set forth all Dr. Cleobury's applications of "Identity-in-Difference" as interpreted by him to the solution of inveterate Idealistic problems, nor his argument in various connexions for a realistic acceptance of the total inclusiveness of the Absolute, of such sort as explains why man can literally become *one* with God and his consciousness part of the Infinite or Universal Consciousness, so that It actually thinks and acts and lives in us and we in It, in the measure in which our thoughts, acts, and lives deepen and widen to embrace God's and express our own truest selves. Such conception and speech are indeed the current coin of religion and have profound meaning and value but whether we can exchange it into hard ontological cash is perhaps another story. The last Chapter on Christian theism and theology in relation to the Philosophy of the Absolute strikes us as in parts the weakest and least satisfactory. There is the author's authentic touch in his remarks on Kant's moral argument for man's immortality (137, 138) and the argument from values is, we believe, valid in a general way, but his doctrine of the good and bad man in respect of survival of death is left with sore obscurities, and on p. 141 it is given an intellectualist twist which rather makes us rub our eyes. But in the old Christian tradition, the difference between sheep and goats was itself a pretty subtle one on which to apportion destiny. Most questionable of all is the equation throughout of the metaphysical Absolute with the God of Theism, quite a different Being answering to very different human needs and with temporal activities and functions, which appear to be impossible for the Absolute though Dr. Cleobury speaks of it as an *active* Absolute. His identification of them requires more elucidation and justification than it gets.

In any case, the real value of the book, challenging attention, consists not only in its revision, in certain respects original, of the classic presentments of Absolute Idealism and the effort to put right some of its assumed implications, but in the author's clear-sighted appreciation of the difficulties raised by his own arguments and his honest refusal to dodge them in a strife for triumph

## NEW BOOKS

more than truth. We may congratulate him on a work which embodies intense persistent thinking and on the clear sinuous style in which it is written. No German professor could thus have made the crooked straight and the rough places plain.

R. NICOL CROSS.

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*The Medieval idea of law as represented by Lucas de Penna. A Study in Fourteenth-Century Legal Scholarship.* By WALTER ULLMANN.

At the end of the last century the study of both the Common Law and the Canon Law in the Middle Ages was revolutionized for English scholars by the great work of F. W. Maitland. His books are still studied and he laid foundations upon which Holdsworth, Z. N. Brooke, and others in England and America have built. In comparison the Civil Law has been badly neglected. We have the articles in the *Cambridge Medieval History* and *The Legacy of the Middle Ages*, we have Vinogradoff's *Roman Law in Medieval Europe*, and, more recently, Kantorowicz's *Studies in the Glossators of the Roman Law*. Dr. Ullmann's book is therefore a welcome help in the cultivation of a neglected field. It is prefaced by an introduction on "The Legal and Political Ideas of the Post-Glossators" by Professor Hazeltine who summarizes many of the points which the author later develops more fully in connexion with the work of Lucas de Penna. The importance of the Civilian for political theory has already been demonstrated in the Carlyles' great work, but it is useful to have it developed in more detail as expounded by one particular lawyer. Dr. Ullmann emphasizes strongly Lucas's moral outlook. At the end of his discussion of the foundations and nature of law he writes: "Lucas's main idea is that law cannot serve as a means to cover unjust, evil intentions. Rights are granted only for a specific purpose, and the bearer of a right cannot plead the cause of law and right when his intentions are in opposition to those of the legislator. This fundamental thesis reveals a mind which is permeated with the spirit of morality rarely—if ever—to be found among jurists. The hypocritical idea of an "objective nature" of law, a slogan of modern jurisprudence, is plainly rejected. Lucas would certainly not have justified the coinage of the trite dictum "Juristen sind böse Christen." Nor would Shylock have found any support from our jurist." One wonders whether in all this Lucas is quite so distinctive among the medieval civilians as Dr. Ullmann seems to imply. Further it must be emphasized that although the civilians were definitely Christian lawyers yet their outlook is markedly different from that of the canonists. The two laws were, for example, in contradiction over the performance of certain kinds of contract. Guido de Baisio (1313) explains the difference by saying that Canon Law tends to apply equity in relations between individuals and does not occupy itself with the subtleties of Roman Law. Antony de Butrio (1338-1408) puts the case more precisely: *Dico quod ideo, quia ius civile principaliter non insequitur finem iuris divini sed finem publicae utilitatis*. The English lawyer and the ecclesiastic may, by a perusal of Dr. Ullmann's book, be strengthened in their conviction of the superiority of their respective systems of the Roman Civil Law, but they will be none the less grateful to him for helping them to understand wherein this superiority lies.

ERIC KEMP.

## PHILOSOPHY

*Old Age. Its Compensations and Rewards.* By A. L. VISCHER. Translated by Bernard Miall. (London: Geo. Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 1947. Pp. 200. 12s. 6d. net.)

In this book little is said of the strain and stress of growing old, and not very much directly about the "compensations and rewards" of old age. But then such strain and stress can only be experienced, and may not be told, and reward or compensation is a grace which a man must find as he may. And "whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must keep silence."

Too often we tend to forget the inscrutable livingness of both youth and age, and we make of them problems, put them into fast categories, and dogmatize about them. Strangely enough we do not generally dogmatize about middle age, and the middle-aged are suffered to follow their individual pursuits with no gloss from the theorist, though perhaps the modern cult of the "common man" indicates even here a bias towards the abstract. Now it is an outstanding merit of this book that in it Dr. Vischer neither sets himself a problem nor propounds a theory. He is entirely undogmatic on the subject of old age, but what he does—and this is of the utmost value—is to release old age from its categorical fastness and to put it back into the open spaces of ordinary living, to reveal it as continuous with its past, and not as a limit of that past. "How good is our life, the mere living."

Dr. Vischer has seen that there is no definite point in time at which a man becomes old, and he shows old age as a shifting thing, shifting as between man and man, and shifting too within the span of one man's lifetime. We should perhaps say of a man not that he is seventy years of age, but rather that he is seventy years of his age. And at seventy he may well be younger in some respects than he was at sixty.

Life does not conform to the measure of years, and Dr. Vischer makes a nice point when he suggests that anniversaries may play a rather sinister role in the clamping down upon him of a man's age.

Life is organic, and old age is part of the close-knit involution of the physical, psychical, social and spiritual elements in the whole of life. As a scientist Dr. Vischer investigates the symptoms and causes of physical decline in the ageing man, but he maintains that such symptoms and causes do not form a closed system, that there is ingression and interference by all the circumambient elements, psychical, social and spiritual, and that the result of this interpenetration is something which is not susceptible to scientific analysis.

Dr. Vischer is a scientist, but he has the eye of an artist, and his work is imbued with something of the active passivity of those who seek not to prove but to see. "Il faut être voyant, toujours voyant."

And he makes a very wide survey, observing old age horizontally in all parts of the world, and vertically down the centuries of time. There is the pre-eminence of youth in ancient Greece, and the cult of age in China now; there is old age in the remote past of Judaism and old age in the Vatican to-day. And, in the passage, from one country to another, from one century to another, many curious and interesting things are brought to light. There is Metchnikoff's method of rejuvenation from Bulgaria, there is a table giving the ages of German rulers from the year 800 to the present time, there is a chapter on old age and longevity in the animal world, there is a consideration of old age in primitive peoples, and there is a record of the incidence of centenarianism.

Many strange facts emerge, but there is a constant transition from the factual to the meditative, and the interludes of meditation are both helpful and illuminating. About memory in old age Dr. Vischer says "It does not simply become worse; it becomes more fastidious. What is actually essential

## NEW BOOKS

comes to the fore, what is unimportant is not retained, is indeed barely remarked. In the thought of the old man the substance of what is perceived fades from view, while the conceptual acquires greater significance. Thought becomes less ample, but more economical. The world is seen with a different vision; it appears poorer in colour and tone, but for that very reason clearer and more transparent." And on the question of old age and its sense of the future we have: "In old age we find that the awareness of the future and with it the sense of life, undergoes all kinds of changes. It may be directed forwards, in undiminished hope, and assurance of new experiences. But if there is no such forward orientation, or if no compensation for it exists, the concrete structure of time that serves as a frame for the anticipation of life collapses, and amid the débris of this structural decay there remains, as the sole temporal fabric, the banal division of time into days, and the discharge of the animal functions."

One would like to linger over this question of the relation and aspect of time to old age, one would like to linger over many other such passages in this book, but with his sure instinct for the individual and the personal the author beckons us on to the survey of a long gallery of portraits, portraits of men and women who, full of years, were still able to serve their generations, and in many instances to do outstanding work in their latter days.

In this gallery are Titian, Renoir, Goethe, Voltaire, Fontane, Verdi, and Ninon de Lenclos—and to such a list of honour we ourselves may well add names illustrious "in England now."

There is no retiring age for the creative artist or for the leader of a salon, but it is otherwise with the majority of men, and when we give up our job not only do we cease to contribute useful work to the community, but too often we suffer diminishment of personal being. The curse of old age, Dr. Vischer says, is boredom, *d'ennui mortel*. Old people so often feel bored, but a boredom which is unacknowledged and even unrecognized may surely yet also sap a man's vitality, and increase the drag of the years!

This problem of boredom is a specific one, and Dr. Vischer points to a solution. He would have not only a Bernard Shaw producing works of art at the age of seventy or eighty or ninety, but an old woman in a home for the aged engaged upon some work within her powers, and which she feels to be useful—helping, say, in a neighbouring hospital or infirmary.

With the increase in numbers in the higher age-groups which is a feature of the modern world it may well be that older—and yet older—men may find work in industry or administration, work in which their qualities of experience, disinterestedness and responsibility may supplement the quicker reactions, the larger adaptability and the greater physical strength, of younger colleagues.

Dr. Vischer gives interesting examples of such experiments in adapting work to the powers of older men, to the great benefit of the men themselves and to the business in which they engage. Such a method means material gain in that it constitutes an increase in man-power for a nation, but more than this is its spiritual value, for it may mean an extension to many of a chance of securing that serenity of mind which should be the dower of age. "For every stage of life has its own psychic modality, its own beauty, its own right to exist, and is a section of life full of a significance of its own."

E. M. ROWELL.

## PHILOSOPHY

*The Vision of Asia.* By L. CRANMER BYNG. With a Foreword by the Rt. Hon. R. A. Butler. (Pocket edition.) (John Murray. Pp. 306. 6s. with index.)

It is not easy to review this book for philosophers. To begin with, Mr. Cranmer Byng's generation, now passing on, is under a real debt to him for the vision he had of a "Wisdom of the East" series and for translating that vision into fact at so moderate a cost to the purchaser. In 1932 the editor of the series appeared in *propria persona* to give his own reactions to the study of Eastern philosophy; to him Asia is essentially the home of the mystic wisdom. He comes, therefore, under the suspicion of being an escapist. But he roundly affirms that he is not. What he dislikes in the West is the tyranny of technical science with the life of the individual sunk in the gelatinous existence of the mass, herded as it is in tenements and stream-lined production shops. He has found what he looked for in the Upanishads, in the Buddha, in Confucius and Lao Tzu. The last-named would appear to be the most congenial to his soul. From these writers he went on to consider the part played by artistic intuition in China and Japan, particularly in the great flowering periods of the T'ang and Sung eras.

It is to Mr. Cranmer Byng's credit that he has tried to put his theories to the test of history. The trouble here is that, having a better knowledge of Western history he looks at it with jaundiced eyes, having a less knowledge of Chinese history he sees it through rose-coloured spectacles. Further, I cannot believe that he uses the same uncritical judgment for the early legends of European history as he uses for those of China's cultural origins. He accepts all that the scholars of the old tradition believed about sage kings back in the 4th millennium B.C. without any reference to modern criticism or archaeological discoveries.

Altogether, therefore, though the book has its charm with its mannered prose style, it is not to be recommended to the analytically minded philosopher. But then of course that is not what Mr. Cranmer Byng sets out to be. His aim is to show how faith in the eternal virtues can be revived by sipping at these Asiatic springs, and this he does in a way which readers of his *Wisdom of the East* series will appreciate.

E. R. HUGHES.

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*La Pensée de Ghazālī.* By A. J. WENSINCK, professeur à l'université de Leiden. (Adrien-Maisonneuve, Paris VI<sup>e</sup> 1940. Pp. ii + 201. Price not stated.) 11 Rue St. Sulpice.

For the sake of convenience (the printer's as well as my own) I propose to call the subject of this book Algazel, the name by which he was known to the medievals. He lived from 1038-1111 A.D. and represented a reaction against the rationalising tendencies introduced into the Mohammedan world by Alfarabi and Avicenna. Having exposed the opinions of these two philosophers in a work which was mistaken by the medievals for an exposition of his own ideas, he proceeded to a *Destruction of the Philosophers*, to which Averroes later replied with a *Destruction of the Destruction*. His chief work was the *Renewal of the Religious Sciences*.

Professor Wensinck (who died in 1939) gives us a study of Algazel's thought in regard to God, man, cosmology, angels, faith and certainty, asceticism and mysticism, death and the future life, omitting any biographical sketch and not really discussing Algazel's relation to his predecessors. The author of a book is, of course, fully entitled to delimit his subject matter as he chooses; but the second omission is perhaps to be regretted, since one of the chief points of interest in regard to Arab philosophy is the tension between theolo-

gian and philosopher, between the Coran on the one hand and Aristotle in Neo-platonic vestments on the other. It is interesting to compare the changing relations between theology and philosophy in the medieval Arab world and the medieval Christian world. However, the author has given a careful and systematic account of Algazel's thought, with many quotations (in French happily) and references, though he might well have had compassion on those of us who know no Arabic by supplying the French translation of the Arabic titles of Algazel's works as mentioned in the bibliography.

Professor Wensinck contends that Algazel was first of all a Mohammedan. This is undoubtedly true. Algazel insisted on creation, on the divine omnicausality and on predestination, thus upholding Mohammedan orthodoxy against what he considered to be the dangerous tendencies of the followers of Aristotle. On the other hand there are obvious Neo-platonic elements in Algazel's thought, which might appear strange in the case of a destroyer of the philosophers. But Algazel was not simply a critic of the unorthodox; he was a mystic, a Sufi, and Sufism incorporated Neo-platonic and also Christian elements. In other words, Algazel the mystic softened the harshness of Mohammedan orthodoxy by fusing it with a mysticism and moral doctrine drawn from Neo-platonism and from Christianity. (Algazel quotes directly from the New Testament) Neoplatonism was thus enlisted in the service of mysticism rather than in that of speculation. In regard to purely philosophic speculation Algazel was critical and even somewhat sceptical; but a large dose of scepticism in philosophy is by no means incompatible with mysticism.

The mystical teaching of Algazel led him to use expressions which savour of pantheism, though, as an orthodox Mohammedan, he certainly did not mean to deny the divine transcendence. That he approximated to pantheism, in expression at least (perhaps it would be better to speak of panentheism) is really no matter for surprise, since the doctrines of strict predestination and divine omnicausality, especially when fused with a mystical doctrine strongly emphasised, can hardly lead to anything else. (The stress laid on love, however, as in Christian mysticism, prevents complete pantheism.) Professor Wensinck puts the matter as follows. "For pantheism God exists only by the universe; for Algazel the universe scarcely exists, God being the only existence. The doctrine of Algazel is the Semitic monotheism seen through Neo-platonism." Yet did not Hegel say that Spinoza was an acosmist rather than a pantheist, although few would wish to deny that the system of Spinoza is a pantheistic system? One should not, however, be lavish with accusations of pantheism; Algazel's motto was really "God versus Aristotle," and by God he did not mean the world, nor did he deny creation. The Neo-platonic elements in his thought were seen in the light of his own experience, which postulated distinction from God as well as union with God. (I do not mean to imply that one can justly call Plotinus, for example, a pantheist, even if there are elements in his system which would seem to lead to pantheism.) The thought of Algazel was thus not simply a theological reaction to philosophy; it was also the protest of religious mysticism against rationalism. Parallel phenomena can be seen in the history of Christian medieval thought.

F. C. COPLESTON, S.J.

*Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism.* By GERSHOM G. SCHOLEM. (Schoken Books, New York. 454 pp. \$5.50.)

Professor Scholem of Jerusalem has issued a revised edition of his monumental work—approximately 200,000 words—on Jewish mysticism. He wishes to remove a common impression that Judaism, the religion of a book, of formalism and legalism, has always been alien to mysticism, using the word as defined by Thomas Aquinas, *Cognitio Dei experimentalis*. In Judaism, as in Islam, which Westcott called petrified Judaism, the transcendent God blazes in solitary splendour, like the sun over the desert, as Christopher Dawson says: Can such a God be known as an experience?

The author is certainly right, as regards prophetic Judaism, which transformed the older Bedouin religion about the same time that a great spiritual awakening took place in China, India, Persia, and Greece. Jeremiah's hope of universal personal inspiration, the second Isaiah's visions, Ezekiel's ecstasies, above all many of the Psalms, belong to the literature of mysticism.

Persian influence, so often underestimated, was not decidedly mystical. But the potent influx of Hellenistic thought, Platonic and Gnostic, left a strong and enduring effect on Judaism from Philo to the Spanish Jew Ibn Gebirol (Avicebron), whose *Fons Vitæ*, a Neoplatonic treatise, was greatly admired by Duns Scotus. I am surprised that Scholem hardly mentions him.

Jewish religion has always been cramped by excessive reverence for the Torah, which has been commented on with fantastic disregard of the obvious meaning of the text. Scholem distinguishes between allegorism and symbolism. The latter, he says, gives a sacramental value to the symbol, which not only suggests a spiritual truth but in a sense enshrines and effectuates it. God Himself, it was said, studies the Torah. The author recognizes that with sacramentalism the danger of magic is not far off.

What are the distinctive features of Jewish mysticism? In the first place it has been almost exclusively masculine. This differentiates it from Catholic mysticism, in which the names of women are as prominent as those of men. Autobiographical and personal experiences are not common in the writings of Jewish mystics, and they are comparatively free from the *Schwärmerei* and sublimated eroticism of many female contemplatives.

And yet sex has intruded even here. In the Talmud there is no hint that the Shekhinah represents a feminine element in God. But this idea is prominent in Kabbalism. It is a Gnostic fantasy, strictly incompatible with Jewish monotheism, and rightly rejected by the Christian Church; but in Catholicism as in the Kabbala the popular desire for a feminine object of worship established itself. In the symbolic world of the Zohar the Shekhinah becomes a symbol of the eternal womanhood, and embodies the mystical idea of afflicted Israel, Rachel weeping for her children.

The Shekhinah in the world is an "exile," in consequence of Adam's fall, which broke the unity of heaven and earth. There is here something like the Platonic picture of life in time as a moving image of eternity. The divine Shekhinah is mystically present in history, in part banished from union with God.

The Zohar, Scholem says, for the first time in rabbinical Judaism, glorifies the state of poverty, as the Old Testament often does. Asceticism in Judaism differs from Catholic asceticism in that while it inculcates chastity, like that of Joseph, who resisted Potiphar's wife, it does not exalt celibacy or virginity. Marriage is not a concession to human weakness, but one of the most sacred mysteries, "a symbolical realization of the union of God and the Shekhinah."

Scholem's words that mysticism is a "phase" in the history of religion do not satisfy me. If we take the word in the sense of the definition of Aquinas,

## NEW BOOKS

quoted above, it is both the beginning and the end of personal religion. As such, it is almost identical in all deeply religious persons, irrespective of time, place, and creed. It may be doubted whether a stubbornly institutionalist religion like Judaism is favourable to the independent and sometimes rebellious spirit of mysticism. There has not been much persecution of heretical mystics in Judaism, but there has been some, and we may remember the furious cuise with which Spinoza was expelled from the community. Still, Professor Scholem has amply vindicated his thesis.

W. R. INGE.

### Books also received:

- LEON CHWISTEK, Ph.D. *The Limits of Science*. Outline of Logic and of the Methodology of the Exact Sciences. With an Introduction and Appendix by Helen Charlotte Brodie, M.A. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. (for the International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method). 1948. Pp. Ivii and 347. 30s. net.
- JANKO LAVRIN. *Nietzsche: An Approach*. London: Methuen & Co., Ltd. 1948. Pp. v + 146. 7s. 6d. net.
- A. H. SMITH. *Horace William Brindley Joseph, 1867-1943*. From the Proceedings of the British Academy, Volume XXXI. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege. Pp. 24. 5s. net.
- M. MERLEAU-PONTY. *Humanisme et Terreur—essai sur le problème communiste*. Paris: Librairie Gallimard. 1947 Pp. 208. 325 fr.
- S. DE Beauvoir. *Pour une Morale de l'Ambiguïté*. Paris: Librairie Gallimard. 1947 Pp. 223 245 fr.
- EDGAR DE BRUYNE. *Études d'Esthétique Médiévale*. 3 vols: I. De Boèce à Jean Scot Erigène. II. L'Époque Romaine. III. Le XIIIe Siècle. 1946. Pp. xiv + 371; x + 420, x + 400. Published by the University of Ghent. No price quoted.
- ROMANO GUARDINI. *The Death of Socrates*. An Interpretation of the Platonic Dialogues: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito and Phaedo. Translated from the German by Basil Wrighton. London: Sheed & Ward. 1948. Pp. xiii + 177. 10s. 6d. net.
- CHARLES MAYER. *Matérialisme Progressiste*. Preface by André Maurois. Paris: Société Française de Presse. 1947 Pp. 176 150 fr.
- GERHARD FUNKE. *Maïne de Bivan*. Philosophisches und politisches Denken zwischen Ancien Régime und Bürgerkönigtum in Frankreich. Bonn: H. Bouvier u. Co. Verlag. 1947. Pp. vii + 432. Price RM. 22.
- HARRY AUSTRYN WOLFSON. *Philo*. Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 1947. Two vols. Pp. xvi + 462, xiv + 531. 10 dollars a set.
- PAUL WEISS. *Nature and Man*. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1946. Pp. xxii + 287. 2 dollars 80 cents.
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- The late HAROLD H. JOACHIM. *Logical Studies*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1948. Pp. 296. 18s. net.
- Editor: VERGILIUS FERM. *Religion in the 20th Century*. New York: Philosophical Library, Inc. 1948. Pp. xix + 470. 5 dollars.



## PHILOSOPHY

*Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Filosofia promosso dall'Istituto di Studi Filosofici*. Vol. I. Il Materialismo Storico. Milan: Castellani & Co. Roma: 1946-1947. Pp lix + 453. No price quoted

GOTTFRIED WILHELM LEIBNIZ. *Vorträge der aus Anlass seines 300. Geburtstages in Hamburg abgehaltenen wissenschaftlichen Tagung*. Herausgegeben von der Redaktion der *Hamburger Akademischen Rundschau*. Hamburg: Hansischer Gildenverlag, Joachim Heitmann & Co. 1946. Pp. 418

HARALD EKLUND. *Die Würde der Menschheit* (Über die erkenntnistheoretischen Voraussetzungen der Religionsphilosophie bei Kant). Upsala Universitets Arsskrift: A. B. Lundequistska Bokhandeln. (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz) 1947-8. Pp. 144.

SEBASTIAN J. DAY, O.F.M., Ph.D. *Intuitive Cognition, A Key to the Significance of the Later Scholastics*. New York: The Franciscan Institute. 1947 Pp. xlii + 216.

## INSTITUTE NOTES

In accordance with the powers granted by the Extraordinary General Meeting of the Institute on February 11, 1948, the Council has passed a Resolution raising the annual subscription payable by members of the Institute to £1 10s. from April 1, 1948, with the proviso that members may have the option of entering into a Deed of Covenant for seven years in favour of the Institute at the original rate of £1 1s. per annum.

The Council has also passed a Resolution increasing the subscription payable by future Life Members to £15.

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### Xth INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHILOSOPHY

It is now possible to give further information concerning the Xth International Congress of Philosophy, to be held at Amsterdam from August 11 to 18, 1948. The Conference will be in accordance with the following scheme: (1) Central Theme: Man, Mankind, Humanity; (2) Metaphysics and General Ontology; (3) Theory of Values (Ethics, Aesthetics, Philosophy of Law, Economics); (4) Logic and General Methodology; (5) Philosophy of Science (Mathematics, Nature, Biology, Psychology, Sociology, etc.); (6) The Age of Spinoza and Leibniz; (7) History of Philosophy; (8) Oriental Philosophy.

*Membership.*—1. Acting Members (subscription fl. 30) are entitled to read papers and to join in the discussions. They have access to meetings, where they have the right to vote, and they receive a free copy of the Proceedings of the Congress and other publications, if any.

2. Subsidiary Members (subscription fl. 15) have access to all scientific and social meetings on the same footing as acting members.

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Subsidiary membership is open to (a) Relatives of acting members, (b) Assistants, secretaries, etc., of acting members; (c) University students, in so far as they hold the qualifications necessary for acting membership. Application forms for subsidiary membership should be countersigned, in cases (a) and (b), by the acting member in question, in case (c) by a University professor.

Those persons who would like to have full particulars of the Xth International Congress at Amsterdam sent to them are asked to apply direct to Prof Dr. E. W. Beth, Bern Zweerskade 231, Amsterdam-Z., Holland.

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There are Local Centres of the Institute at Bangor, Cardiff, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Durham, and Sheffield.

Further information and forms of application for membership may be had on application to the Director of Studies at University Hall, 14 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1.

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. CONFLICT OF IDEOLOGIES. J D. MABBOTT, M.A. . . . .	195
II. THE CHOICE OF A WORLD OUTLOOK PROFESSOR DOROTHY M. EMMET . . . . .	208
III. PSYCHOLOGY AND THE MORAL PROBLEMS OF OUR TIME. W. J H. SPROTT, M.A. . . . .	227
IV. "THINKING AND MEANING." (Professor Ayer's Inaugural Lecture.) PROFESSOR H H. PRICE . . . . .	239
V. ON THE FOUNDATIONS AND APPLICATION OF FINITE CLASSICAL ARITHMETIC G J WHITROW, M A., D Phil. . . . .	256
VI. PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY. PHILOSOPHY IN ITALY . . . . .	262
VII. NEW BOOKS . . . . .	264
VIII. OBITUARY NOTICE ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD . . . . .	287
IX. INSTITUTE NOTES . . . . .	288

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## THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY APPEAL FOR NEW MEMBERS AND DONATIONS

THE Council is willing to receive applications for membership of the Institute from all those who are interested in philosophy.

The Institute has no endowments, and its work, which includes lecture courses and meetings for discussion in the various Centres, as well as the conduct of the Journal, cannot be carried on from revenue derived solely from annual subscriptions. The Council, therefore, appeals for donations, small or large, from sympathizers with the Institute's aims.

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# PHILOSOPHY

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## CONFLICT OF IDEOLOGIES

J. D. MABBOTT, M.A

This paper contains the substance of a lecture delivered to the Institute under the title "World Peace and World Morals" in November 1947. It is now published in *Philosophy* on the suggestion of members of the audience at that lecture.

### INTRODUCTION

THE Harriman Report on United States aid to Europe included the following passage:

"We all know that we are faced in the world to-day with two conflicting ideologies. One is a system in which individual rights and liberties are maintained. The opposing system is one where iron discipline by the State ruthlessly stamps out individual liberties and obliterates all opposition."

This picture of international relations has been kept steadily before our eyes in recent months. Indeed the question seems no longer whether there is such a conflict but whether or how soon it will lead to war. In such circumstances, political philosophers must have read with special interest Mr. T. D. Weldon's recent work, *States and Morals*, in which he shows how the basic political differences between States rest on divergent moral beliefs. It would appear that differences of ideology, of moral standards or values, are the main causes of our present unrest and threaten, as nothing else does, the peace of the world. This is the thesis I wish to examine.

### ILLUSTRATION FROM PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

It may help to clear the issues if we consider how far divergences of moral standards contribute to personal conflicts in private life; and then (reversing Plato's order) proceed from the small and familiar letters of private conduct to the larger and less familiar

## PHILOSOPHY

letters of international affairs. There are four types of personal conflict to be distinguished here.

(i) Personal conflicts are usually due to immoral actions; that is, to the fact that one party or both do not live up to their own moral standards. Theft, assault, blackmail, bribery—these are usually committed by people who are well aware that they ought not to commit them.

(ii) Personal conflicts are often due to non-moral (not to immoral) action. They arise when the motives of the parties are neither moral nor immoral. Competition, the struggle for existence, the duel between two suitors for a lady's hand, the crushing of an economic rival, the cutting down of a wage rate, the pressure to push it up; these are all cases in which the combatants do not think of themselves as breaking moral laws in their actions. Nor, however, do they think of themselves as upholding or crusading for moral codes. They accept neither praise nor blame, whether they succeed or whether they fail.

(iii) Personal conflicts sometimes arise because both contestants accept the same moral standard, but the standard itself is such as to bring them into conflict. Two fathers each unselfishly striving for the good of his own family may thus clash; or two headmasters each loyally upholding the claims of his own school to some contested field or building or endowment. Such contestants would usually be proudly conscious of their own moral rectitude, and claim moral credit for such a struggle or for success in it.

(iv) Finally there are a few personal conflicts which are due to differences between the moral codes of the parties. Examples may be seen when a disciplinarian father and a libertarian mother come to loggerheads about bringing up their children, or where a man with a strong sense of truth or justice tries to achieve these ends at all costs, while a colleague of his, more sensitive to suffering or more appreciative of peace, tries to stop him.

The great majority of personal conflicts fall in the first two classes. They are due to immoral or to non-moral action. The moral standards of the disputants do not help to cause them. In the few cases where moral standards cause the trouble they come in by two different routes. The disputants may have the same moral standard, but the standard may be such as to bring about conflict. Or they may have different moral standards and the difference is the cause.

### THE TYPES OF INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

There are two reasons why international conflicts are more likely to involve moral standards than personal conflicts are. Most personal conflicts involve direct contact, and people in direct contact have

## CONFLICT OF IDEOLOGIES

usually grown up in the same social setting and tend therefore to agree in their moral standards. But States are less likely to share the same moral standards. Moreover, individuals may frequently act immorally. But a government has to try to get its own people behind it for any conflict, and it is not easy for it to do this in support of any action which violates the moral standards of the people in question. It is rare, therefore, that peace is threatened by overtly immoral action. In the second type of conflict the disputes were due to non-moral factors. In the international field this may certainly occur. Economic forces such as starvation, population pressure, competition for markets may generate disagreement. With these causes of conflict I am not concerned in this paper. On the whole it seems unlikely that such factors should lead to war without the additional backing of some moral or ideological element. This leaves the last two classes of conflict distinguished in the previous section. So now the problem can be stated more clearly. It is to be divided into two problems. (i) Is there any moral belief whose adoption by one or more States is liable to threaten peace? (ii) Are there any cases in which differences of moral belief are liable to threaten peace?

### MORAL BELIEFS WHICH ENDANGER PEACE

No belief can endanger peace unless it is adopted by a government as a basis of national policy and supported by the people living under that government. There are some peculiar moral beliefs (such as vegetarianism when it rests on moral grounds) which are not likely to be so adopted. There seems indeed to be only one moral belief which in its own intrinsic character threatens peace and which is liable to be adopted as a basis of governmental policy. That belief is exclusive nationalism. It is the belief of a government or people in the intrinsic superiority of that people, with the corollary that the interests of that people form the only or the paramount claim upon them. It cannot be denied that the interest of one's fellow-citizens constitutes a moral claim on a citizen and an even stronger moral claim on a government. It is not the recognition of this claim which is the danger, but its expansion to include all morality or to eliminate or override all other moral claims. "My country right or wrong" is the slogan of this creed. So far as Nazism appealed to anything moral in its followers this was its appeal. The corollaries were clearly drawn. The two pillars of western morality might be said to be pity and justice. Hans Frank on different occasions defined them both. "Justice is whatever benefits the German people, injustice whatever harms them." And again, "As a matter of principle we shall have pity for the German people and for no one else in the world." Himmler said to the German generals on the eve of the Russian campaign,



## PHILOSOPHY

"What happens to a Russian or a Czech does not interest me in the slightest . . . Whether these nations live in prosperity or starve to death, interests me only in so far as we need them as slaves for our *Kultur*. Whether ten thousand Russian females fall down dead from exhaustion while digging an anti-tank ditch, interests me only in so far as the anti-tank ditch for Germany is finished."

It may be questioned whether this is a moral theory. It was no doubt often a mask for brutal sadism or for the lust for power. But it certainly is a moral theory, and unless it could have been presented as such to the German people its chances of success would have been greatly lessened. "Sacrifice all for Germany" is a moral principle determining what acts are to be held right and what wrong, what states of affairs deemed good and what bad.

Nationalism in this extreme form does not seem at present to be an acute danger. But there are factors in the present situation which may revive it. In a world of shortages and dislocation, governments are being increasingly drawn into the economic field. This tendency is an inevitable one, though it may be reinforced and intensified by positive socialistic ideals. For only inclusive territorial units can exercise on their members the compulsion necessary to carry out a rationing scheme, to impose quotas on imports, or to implement credit agreements. This means that the State is increasingly looked upon by people as the unit of economic life, and other States are regarded as units important to me either as hostile or as helpful to my own well-being. For this reason economic co-operation between States, desirable enough on economic grounds, is also a salutary counter-weight to the tendency of the ordinary man to picture the world as consisting of national units which are either helping his country for their own ulterior purposes or are bent on its destruction.

Nationalism, then, seems to be the one ideology which in its own nature threatens international peace. It is to be noticed that the threat is accentuated when the number of addicts increases. If our enemies had won the war, there would then have been two states (or perhaps three, including Italy) equally devoted to the creed of expanding and aggressive nationalism. It is obvious that their agreement on moral principle would have been inclined to make conflict between them more rather than less likely.

### MORAL DIFFERENCES WHICH ENDANGER PEACE

Here the obvious example would seem to be the opposition between communism and the ideology of the western democracies. There are two questions. Is this a *moral* conflict? Are the ideologies such as inevitably to lead to conflict or even to war? Mr. Weldon, in his book

*States and Morals*, maintains that all basic political differences are really moral differences. He draws from this some important corollaries. It is no use arguing with the upholder of a rival political system. No one ever changed his fundamental moral convictions as a result of argument. It is no use being morally indignant with him, for he is (like a conscientious objector) standing by moral convictions of his own and as conscious of his rectitude as you are of yours. It is no use trying to sell him your political system or to impose it upon him by constitutional machinery, for his moral standards will always reject it or operate to prevent it from working effectively. It is no use trying to co-operate with him in any organized international association, for the aims and methods of political action of the two rivals could never be harmonized within a single system. Mr. Weldon, moreover, holds in moral philosophy the doctrine that there is no absolute or objective standard of moral value. From this additional (if dubious) doctrine more political corollaries follow. Since no moral principle is inherently superior to any other moral principle, no political ideology is right and the others wrong. I said above that you could not argue anyone out of his political creed because that would mean arguing him out of his moral convictions, which is impossible. But you might hope that he would nevertheless change his moral convictions by "conversion" and that you might work to bring this about by "re-education." This will not do, for words such as "conversion" and "re-education" suggest an awakening to truth, and the claims this implies are unjustified if all moral attitudes are equally defensible. The only grounds for such efforts would be the aim of having a more comfortable neighbour or a more reliable ally.

The practical applications of these conclusions is striking. They explain why the conflict between east and west seems so intractable. We ought to realize that it is no good evincing moral disapproval of Soviet policy. We must just agree to differ. Nor should we try to impose our conception of democracy on Bulgaria or Yugoslavia, unless we are sure that the peoples of those countries hold the moral beliefs appropriate to that conception. This is sometimes put in the form "Bulgaria is not yet ready for democracy." But on Mr. Weldon's view this expression indicates spiritual pride. It suggests that our sort of system is the political expression of a correct (or mature or developed or civilized) moral attitude, while the present political methods of the Bulgarians rest on moral attitudes which are low or backward or barbarian. "Bulgarians are not ready for democracy." One might as well say "Bulgarians are not yet ready for rough cider." No wonder the United Nations Organization has failed. For both in its aims (the four freedoms, world-revolution) and in its methods of work (discussion, the veto, the rights of small nations) any world organization would be bound to split on such basic moral

issues. Many observers of the international scene must surely see in these corollaries drawn from a general theory a vivid description of actual fact. Indeed the cap fits so well that the theory is greatly confirmed by this correspondence with fact.

## THE IDEOLOGY OF THE SOVIET UNION

What is the basic political theory of the U.S.S.R.? Mr. Weldon says it is the Organic Theory of the State. On that theory, the State is more important than the individual. Individuals are instruments or organs only; their acts are to be morally judged and their lives used in State service. No other service counts. The citizen or government of the State has no obligations towards the citizens of other States. He must treat them, too, as tools or instruments for the good of his own State (since all his acts are to be judged by that standard). Now there is much in internal Soviet policy which suggests this view. Soviet authorities (military or political) show a marked indifference to individual lives and a ruthless vigour in pressing home the State's needs and interests. Similarly in international affairs the impression grows that Russian interests are held by Soviet statesmen to override all other obligations and to justify any action. Mr. Weldon sees no difference between the ideologies of Nazi Germany and of the Soviet Union. "Germany first; Germans nowhere. Germany first, other States nowhere." Substitute "Russia" for "Germany" and you have the Soviet creed.

This analysis is open to doubt. It may be questioned whether Germany or Russia has exemplified the Organic Theory. In Nazi Germany the State was an instrument for the triumph and supremacy of the German race. It was not an end in itself. The basic creed of Germany was the *Herrenvolk*, or Master-Race doctrine. Hitler was primarily Führer of the German people—of Germans everywhere, in the Sudetenland, in Roumania, in the Argentine, in the United States—and only secondarily Head of the German State. "Führer and Chancellor"—the order is significant.

Now there are very great similarities between the Nazi State and the Soviet Union: the organization and the special position of "the Party," the elimination of other parties, the secret police, the propaganda machine, the censorship, the purges, etc. This is natural, for Hitler copied much from the Soviet Union. But all these are resemblances in the ways in which power is organized, retained, increased, and applied. The basic difference lies in the ends to which power is directed. In Germany the end was the unification and the world-domination of the German race. There is no such creed in Russia. No doubt during the recent war it was convenient to appeal to memories of Russia's national heroes. But neither the Russian

## CONFLICT OF IDEOLOGIES

leaders nor the Russian people suffer from *Herrenvolk* delusions. They often have a deep sense of being Russian, but this does not lead them to persecution of non-Russian minorities at home, nor to the enslavement of non-Russian peoples abroad, in the name of the intrinsic moral and cultural superiority of their own race.

If, in Russia, the State is not an end in itself, what is the end to which Russian State action is directed? The obvious answer is communism. Let us suppose this is the correct answer. The next question is this: Is communism in its own nature essentially a threat to peace, as the *Herrenvolk* doctrine and the *Lebensraum* (Living-space) doctrine of the Nazis certainly were? Communism is primarily an economic theory of the control of the means of production. It is not necessarily or intrinsically a force for international aggression. There are, however, two possible developments which might make it appear to be so.

First, there is the possibility that a government might adopt communism as its religion and regard itself as having a mission to convert the world. Christianity is not intrinsically a doctrine of war and aggression. But when a government regards itself as having a duty to spread Christianity by political methods—by force and fear—then you get Crusades. In the early days of the Soviet Union there were signs that this crusading spirit lay behind Soviet policy. It was the view of the "Westerners"—the group of returned exiles of whom Lenin and later Trotsky were the leaders—that Soviet Communism was principally of importance as the precursor and spearhead of World Revolution. This group was completely eliminated by purge or exile; Stalin, under the banner of "Socialism in a single State," won the day. It is true that there are three different explanations of Stalin's policy at that time. One is that he really believed in his slogan—that he was then and always has been primarily interested in Soviet communism and has no crusading zeal for communism outside the Union. The second is that he was just as earnest a crusader as Lenin or Trotsky, and that his slogan was only a matter of tactics. World revolution remained the goal, but the revolution must be secured in Russia first. Russia could not afford to go crusading until her own conversion was a securely accomplished fact. The third explanation is that the Stalin-Trotsky battle was a straightforward power-conflict, like the similar battle which ended in the Roehm purge in Germany. Neither side cared about communism except as a means to power, and the two slogans were pure "window-dressing." It is obvious that the choice between these three theories will affect our view of the world as a scene of conflict between rival ideologies. But in all three cases it is clear that communism is a threat to world peace, if it is so, only because the Soviet Government have decided that it shall be so, and not because

## PHILOSOPHY

of anything in the communist creed itself. Christians do not now believe that their government has a duty to propagate Christianity by political methods throughout the world. There is no reason why any communist should believe this of communism.

There are, however, two routes by which communism might lead to aggression. It is always tempting for a government to try to heighten the loyalty of its subjects and increase the spirit of unity in its country by the use of some non-political faith as a rallying point and a driving force in its own support. It is also always tempting for a government, beset by difficulties at home and compelled to keep its people under rigid and brutal controls, to provide them with foreign conquests to keep them quiet. On this interpretation of Soviet policy, the Soviet leaders are using the communist crusade as a piece of political tactics. The second line of development is this. A communist might hold that communism in a single State is insecure because such a State will always be open to attack from the ring of capitalist States which would encircle it. Communism itself would be a peaceful and non-aggressive creed, if it were not constantly menaced by crusading and aggressive capitalist States bent on its destruction. The annexation of border territories, the erection of puppet-governments in neighbouring States, the support of communist parties abroad, all these would then be security measures dictated by fear.

I do not attempt to judge between these various guesses at the Russian enigma. What I am interested in is the connection between them and the picture of the ideological conflict from which I started. It may be said that the choice makes no practical difference. On the crusading view of Soviet policy, the Comintern was and the Cominform will be the official Soviet instrument for world-revolution. Its support would be a first priority in Russian policy. Its aim would be to spread communism, to train leaders who would preach and finally practise communism in their own countries. On the security view, the Comintern was and the Cominform will be an instrument of Soviet pressure, a tool for weakening foreign States, for espionage, and for the furtherance of Soviet interests. But on either view the Comintern was and the Cominform will be an attack on national sovereignty or even a school for traitors. What difference does it make? Again, on the crusading view, the Soviet Union set up puppet communist governments in Poland and Roumania because communism is the true religion and its triumph the goal of Soviet policy. On the security view, she set up these régimes so as to have a buffer or "glacis" against future attacks, so that any invader would have to fight his way through a thousand miles of alien territory before he violated Russian soil, so that his fighter-bases would be beyond reach of Soviet towns and aerodromes. But, again, what does it

## CONFLICT OF IDEOLOGIES

matter? Poland and Roumania had to swallow their communist pill either way. But it does matter. For if the motive is crusading communism, it is a genuine ideology—something with which no compromise is possible. Wherever it halts, it fails. But if the Soviet quest is one for power and security, we may expect it to advance here and retreat there with a realist recognition of the forces against it.

### THE IDEOLOGY OF THE WESTERN DEMOCRACIES

The two natural claimants for the title of "Ideology of the West" are Christianity and Democracy. First, Christianity. Communism would seem to be its irreconcilable rival and both appear to be positive religious forces. For various reasons it is not easy to see the struggle in these terms. It is true that communism both in Marxist theory and in practice has been anti-Christian. But there are obvious historical reasons for this. The Christian Churches in Europe have, more often than not, been conservative in character; and in many cases they have been active political opponents of left-wing parties. In Russia, in particular, the Church was closely identified with the Czarist régime. But there is nothing in the basic aims of communism which is anti-Christian. There is nothing anti-Christian about collective farms, the control of factories by workers' councils, the collective ownership of the means of production, or the principle "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need." There is a parallel here in the Marxist theory of the State. Marx's definition of the State as the instrument for exploitation of the workers was partly provoked by the behaviour of the actual governments of his own day. But the doctrine that, with the disappearance of classes, the State would wither away is obviously bound to be scrapped as soon as communism captures the State machine. The anti-State features of Marxism then are an historical accident; it seems possible that the anti-religious features are an historical accident also.

But, it may be objected, communism is anti-Christian because it is materialist and because it requires from its supporters a fanatical devotion beside which no other religion could possibly live. Here also, I think, are historical accidents. The materialism of communism, deeply rooted as it is in official text-books, seems to be a purely accidental excrescence. This Marxist view of history, of science, and of the world is a piece of dated and unconvincing dialectic which even communists might well come to regard as any philosopher now regards the dialectic of Hegel, to which Marx owed so much, as a museum-piece and an historical curio. The fanatical devotion to communism seems also curiously *démodé* in Russia. A revolutionary creed which has to make its way in the world may be well advised

## PHILOSOPHY

to require of its handful of early believers that they should be communists first, last and all the time; but when communism is in full control of a State it is not only unnecessary but impossible to maintain its status as an all-devouring Moloch and a fanatical faith. In Russia only the Party (subject to constant purges and reductions in number) is supposed to make this high demand. It is the priesthood—faith absorbed and single-minded. And even in the Party it is obvious that there must be many members wholly absorbed in some technical or administrative task. When your faith is the *status quo* it is not easy to go on being fanatical about it. And, as for the ninety-nine per cent of the population who are not members of the Party, there is not even a pretence that they need be fanatical communists. Thus the opposition between communism and any other religion is weakened also. In fact it would not surprise me to find developing a Christian communism claiming for this economic and political creed (as has been claimed for so many others and sometimes with less plausibility) the authority of Christ himself.

Looked at from our side of the curtain, too, Christianity does not seem a good candidate for the place of protagonist. Christianity is a spiritual faith. When it has descended into the political arena and become (or backed) a single political party it has always suffered degradation. This is equally true on the international plane. Christian spy services, Christian naval bases, a Christian monopoly of the atomic bomb, Christian dollars for Turkey, Christian tanks for Greece, these features of western political action are necessary and desirable but they do not look comfortable under that banner. (While many people here recognized the necessity and effectiveness of the intensive bombing of German towns, many among them also felt uneasy when they heard this policy preached from pulpits or backed by Bishops.) The selection of Christianity as the ideology to be set against communism also weakens the anti-communist forces. For under which banner should Arabs or Indians or Chinese be enrolled? Even our present support of Turkey against Soviet aggression looks a little odd if it is regarded as a blow for Christianity.

The usual alternative ideology is democracy. But a form of government does not seem to be the sort of thing that could serve as a creed. Moreover democracy can be claimed by all sides and with some justice everywhere. If we try to define it or to look for the special features we think particularly democratic, we shall find difficulty in regarding them as more than means to ends. Plebiscites, referendums, elections, many-party systems, the majority principle—all these look like machinery not like supreme moral values. (This is true also of dictatorship, which was once regarded as the opposite of democracy. Dictatorship, too, is no ideology. Any threat it presents

## CONFLICT OF IDEOLOGIES

to peace lies not in dictatorship itself but in the policy a given dictator adopts. It is no doubt true that Franco's government in Spain was put into power by foreign aggression and is maintained in power by oppression and terror. But the original resolution on Spain passed by the United Nation's Organization—that Franco's government is at present a threat to world peace—was absurd. Even more absurd would be the view that it was such a threat because it was a dictatorship. For on that view the Salazar government in Portugal must be a threat to world peace also.) Thus I cannot see in democracy an ideology or a moral creed which can serve as a bulwark against communism or Soviet hegemony. An added reason for rejecting democracy as our basic and central faith is that all the processes we call democratic could be used to destroy those values which, as I shall show below, I regard as the essential features of our way of life.

Perhaps our question is unnecessary. No single ideology is required. It suffices that we all reject communism or Soviet hegemony. Similarly it was sufficient that our late allies should agree with us in disliking the prospect of German domination; and events have shown that this was indeed all that we were agreed about; for as soon as we came to devise those positive policies which Germany's defeat made necessary we could agree on nothing at all. It does not need two ideologies to make a war. One is enough, provided that it is sufficiently aggressive and sufficiently objectionable. So perhaps we have no western ideology and need none.

Yet, it would be said, this will weaken our position. How can we attract allies if we have no positive aims to put before them? How can we call for sacrifice and loyalty if we can provide no idols to worship? Many critics could say that what we lack is a single dynamic creed, comparable to fascism and communism, a creed to whose acceptance all our children can be educated, to whose service all our young people can be dedicated, something to bind us together into a single living unit, to close our ranks and direct our march. How very tempting it all sounds! But in fact it is a sign of our political maturity that we have no such single political faith to dominate our lives.

Yet, among the many things that we value, we can count some which go unrecognized beyond the curtain. We recognize the intrinsic value of knowledge and of beauty, while elsewhere art is propaganda and truth must toe the party line. We see that these things can only survive if their adherents are left free; so we use repression of opinion and censorship of art with regret and sparingly and never as an instrument of positive policy. We have a special regard for the dignity and value of individual personality. The Russians must be genuinely puzzled about our reactions to the question of the "Soviet



## PHILOSOPHY

wives." They would agree with Stalin that a matter concerning fifteen citizens is settled at a very low administrative level. Stalin thinks in millions. Why should not Mr. Bevin do so too? They would be equally astonished at the Archer Shee case (dramatized recently in *The Winslow Boy*). That the highest legal authorities in the land should be invoked, that Parliament should turn aside from the disposal of millions of pounds and the fate of millions of people to spend hours discussing the question whether a small boy was justly or unjustly expelled from his school—this would seem another of those English lunacies in which we suddenly lose all sense of proportion. The Russian could sympathize with the French critic who read on a Piccadilly poster "Disaster to England," and rushed to buy a paper, only to find that Hobbs was out for a duck.

The values we prize (which all together may be called Liberty or, better, Liberties) come as near as we can get to a political ideology. But they form no single creed nor even any very coherent pattern. We constantly have to adjust them one against another and all of them against the welfare of the people. Thus they do not form an ideology which can unify a nation; still less can they act as a positive and dynamic inspiration to a government. For most of them operate, and operate rightly, to curb governmental action or remove from its grip whole fields of human endeavour. Least of all can they lead in themselves to a clash with other governments or to an aggressive foreign policy. Quite the reverse. It is in their name that we withdraw from India and Burma and Egypt, that we set self-government as the goal of our colonial development, that we reject the temptations to set up puppet States abroad. So far as we are true to our ideals we practise tolerance, non-intervention, *laissez-faire*. Thus our reaction to other and aggressive ideologies is normally a negative one; and this is even truer of the United States. The Soviet picture of the United States as an expanding, aggressive, imperialistic power bent on conquest and crusading for capitalism is ludicrously false. It is only the violence and pertinacity of Soviet expansion which has averted the isolationism of 1919 and kept the United States continuously and increasingly interested in Europe.

I indicated in the preceding section of this paper that it is very doubtful whether we are faced with an ideology which is intrinsically aggressive. This belief is confirmed when it is realized what are the features of life in the U.S.S.R. and her satellite countries to which we most object, and which offend most obviously against the values I have described as coming nearest to a "western ideology." These features have nothing particular to do with communism, as is shown by the fact that all of them were found in Hitler's Germany and many of them are found in Franco's Spain. The purge, forced labour, compulsory transfers of population, concentration camps, arrest

## CONFLICT OF IDEOLOGIES

without warrant, punishment without trial, the use of children and neighbours as spies and informers, the method of ensuring a man's surrender by threatening his relatives, the corruption of truth and beauty and education, the readiness to violate any obligation and to use any tools—these are the things we dislike. This (and not the collectivization of farming or industry) is the fate we fear for Czechoslovakia, as we feared it with equal justice in 1939. Now all this does not add up to an ideology. All of it would be defended by communists as it was by fascists as being means to ends. The quotation from the Harriman Report with which I introduced my subject claims to describe "two conflicting ideologies." So far as it describes our western attitude, I have shown I agree with its emphasis on liberty (and not on Christianity or democracy). But its description of "the opposing system" is clearly not a description of an ideology.

### CONCLUSION

I may now sum up this paper. I have tried to show that it is doubtful whether Soviet policy is inspired by any ideology at all; and that, if it is, that ideology is not in its own nature such as inevitably to lead to conflict or to war. The reasons why the U.S.S.R. push forward any such ideology by aggression or by methods which they share with Fascism are therefore not themselves ideological. I have argued that we in the West have no unified political ideology; that such ideology as we have is not strictly speaking political; that, so far as it enters politics, it comes in as a limiting negative, inhibitive force and not as a dynamic, aggressive, expansive doctrine; and that it is opposed essentially, not to anything ideological in the eastern world, but to features which are (for a communist or a fascist) means to ends. I conclude that, however dark and dangerous the outlook may be, it is not well described as a clash between moral standards or between opposing ideologies. And this, if true, should be to some extent reassuring. For such a clash would be the most inevitable and intransigent cause of conflict. There are many factors which tend to war at present—including even now that fear and suspicion which Hobbes saw to be inevitable in a world of unlimited national sovereignties. No doubt there are other forces too—the desire for power, the hope to cover oppression at home by aggression abroad, the pursuit of resources, markets and raw materials. But I do not find among the present causes of war that most recalcitrant of all causes, the head-on collision between irreconcilable crusaders for incompatible moral creeds.

# THE CHOICE OF A WORLD OUTLOOK<sup>1</sup>

PROFESSOR DOROTHY M. ENMET.

I TAKE it that my part in this series is not to set forward some particular world outlook, or even to describe different kinds of world outlook. That will have been done already much more adequately by the lecturers who precede me. My part is to discuss what in general is meant by world outlooks, why it is so difficult to arrive at agreement on them, and what kind of considerations should be taken into account in deciding for one rather than another.

The expression "world outlook" is not very satisfactory, but it is perhaps the best translation we can get of the more satisfactory German word *Weltanschauung*. The word has been given its present sense in philosophy by certain German thinkers, notably by Dilthey. (English readers will find a discussion of "world outlooks" in this sense in Albert Schweitzer's *Civilization and Ethics*, the translation of the second volume of his *Philosophy of Civilization*.) Prof. Hodges in his *Introduction to Dilthey* (p. 160) defines *Weltanschauung* as "a complex of ideas and sentiments, comprising (a) beliefs and convictions about the nature of life and the world, (b) emotional habits and tendencies based on these, and (c) a system of purposes, preferences, and principles governing action and giving life unity and meaning." If this definition is to be wide enough to cover world outlooks which are pessimistic, (c) might have to consist in an attitude of e.g. fortitude or rebellion.

"World" is thus here being used in a somewhat vague and very inclusive sense. It certainly does not mean just our earth (the *orbis terrarum*). Nor does it mean simply the physical universe as studied by natural science. In this lecture I shall never be talking about the "world" in the former sense; and when I am talking about it in the latter sense, I shall call it "nature." But the expression "world outlook" includes much more than this, and more than a cosmology. It includes man's interpretation of himself as related to his world, the latter comprising his social and possibly his supernatural as well as his physical environment. It includes what is sometimes called an "attitude towards life," and by this is here meant not just something like "the American way of life," or what is nowadays sometimes called a culture pattern, but the connection of this "attitude towards life" with an intellectual scheme. So Christianity and Marxism could be described as "world outlooks."

The expression "choice of a world outlook," as implying conscious

<sup>1</sup> Series *Contemporary World Outlook*, (V).

selection, is of course open to challenge. Ought we to imagine ourselves browsing about among possible world views, displayed to invite our custom, and choosing one and rejecting others, as one might choose a hat? There is something dilettante about the suggestion. Should we not rather say that, of alternative world outlooks, one must be true, or at least contain more truth than the others, and that we have therefore no choice but to accept this and reject the others? Or the phrase "choice of a world outlook" may be challenged from the opposite side. It may be said that our world outlook is ultimately determined by social or by temperamental psychological factors beyond our control or even beyond our awareness, and therefore it is an illusion to hold that we can exercise any real choice in the matter. The first challenge would come from those who maintain that there should and can be a universally agreed objective system of metaphysical knowledge. The latter challenge comes from those who say that, while world views may be expressive of attitudes of mind, there is no way in which canons of objective knowledge can apply to them: *quot homines, tot sententiae*.

Against the former challenge I shall urge that there are real difficulties in the view that metaphysics can be a "science" whose results can command general agreement. But having made this much concession to relativism, I shall urge against the latter party that there are considerations to be weighed, arguments to be pursued with intellectual candour in coming to a world outlook, and that, therefore, if such views are not scientific hypotheses, neither are they simply the expression of socially or temperamentally determined attitudes of mind.

The educated layman who asks philosophers to help him to reach a reasoned outlook on life (if this is what he asks), presumably holds in effect some such mid-way position. He is apt to be distrustful of "metaphysics" (all too easily a word of abuse), and yet he is disturbed if he is told that fundamental beliefs about the world cannot be in some sense true or false. In his Inaugural Address, *Clarity is Not Enough*, given to the first Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association held after the late war, Prof. Price considered this "consumer's demand." He made a stocktaking of the trends in philosophy between the two wars, and showed that while on the whole the criticisms levelled at the "analytic" preoccupations of most contemporary philosophers were misdirected, yet that the latter could justly be criticized for failing to do much to satisfy the "consumer's demand" for help in forming a unified and reasoned outlook on the world. If, he said, we do not accept the contention that it is in principle impossible to satisfy the consumer's demand; if we can be disabused of the idea that a "world outlook" is necessarily an attempt to establish matters of fact by wholly *a priori* reasoning without reference to experience, then it may be possible

to turn once more to consider the possibilities of this synoptic type of philosophy.

There is plenty of evidence that there is a demand for synoptic thinking. We see it in the widespread complaints against "over-specialization," and the plea for more unity and breadth of vision in, for instance, university teaching. But the very intensity of specialization against which complaints are made makes the corrective more difficult to attain. A few generations of close specialization have made us distrustful of generalizations. Those who try to take wider and more inclusive views are therefore pretty sure to burn their fingers, especially if they are unfortunate philosophers, who will be told that they are talking about things they do not properly understand. Perhaps we should not be too afraid of this; on the other hand, we must often have an uneasy feeling that the accusation is true. For the result of specialized and detailed research has been to make standards of evidence, whether in the natural sciences or in subjects like history, more and more exacting. Hence, except among the few theorists in physical science, we get a tendency to concentrate on the piecemeal establishment of matters of fact; and if a general world outlook is implicit in such a tendency, it might perhaps be symbolized by the saying, "The world is the totality of all that is the case" (I borrow Wittgenstein's saying without raising the question of what he himself means by it). But as standards of evidence for establishing matters of fact become more exacting, the question of what constitutes evidence when we pass outside the sciences becomes more difficult to answer. Obviously there are methods of determining evidence, for instance in historical research, which do not depend solely on *sensory* verification; neither is sensory verification the whole of the story in establishing scientific theories. But the temper produced by specialized training is one which breeds distrust of generalization. If we are seeking a synoptic world outlook we must therefore face the Scylla of Positivism, the contention that what constitutes evidence is always in the last resort an appeal to empirical matters of fact.

Scylla may perhaps be escaped by showing that the idea of empirical matter of fact is not altogether simple and straightforward. "The totality of all that is the case" would comprise hosts, perhaps an infinite number, of events. "Matters of fact" for science or history must consist of some relatively isolable events, and to isolate them we must make some selective judgment as to what is interesting or important. Moreover, when we say that something is a fact we mean that it has certain at least relatively permanent characteristics (it won't suddenly vanish or undergo a complete transformation), and that it has causal connections with other things. Is it a fact that there is a black cat on the mantelpiece or am I just "seeing things"? It

## THE CHOICE OF A WORLD OUTLOOK

will, of course, be a fact that I am having an experience which feels like seeing a cat, but if I am to know whether "in fact" there is a cat, I make certain assumptions about tests of objectivity. These assumptions may not necessarily be universal categories (as Kant thought Substance and Cause to be), but it may be that we make some demands of a general kind on any phenomenon which is to pass for a "fact." The Scylla of pure positivism may therefore be avoided by showing that the possibility of verification by appeal to "fact" depends on a background of presuppositions and assumptions.

Some of these presuppositions are postulates which we see must be allowed in order that a particular kind of inquiry may go on. But when we come to anything as complex as a world outlook, we must take account not only of methodological postulates, but of a whole background of general assumptions about what is and what is not reasonable. So if we avoid the Scylla of pure positivism, we may be engulfed in the Charybdis of saying that a world outlook can be no more than an ideology. By an "ideology" is here meant a complex of ideas, convictions, and valuations which are ultimately derived from the social and psychological heritage of the person who holds them, and which he merely attempts to rationalize in his conscious philosophizing. Hence it may be said that our outlook on the world depends in the end on irrational factors beyond reach of criticism. So we may seem to be in a dilemma: either we stick to piecemeal investigations concerning matters of fact, without inquiring too closely into the assumptions on which our procedure is based, and without venturing out on wider schemes of interpretation. Or we try to unearth our ultimate presuppositions and present them in the form of a world outlook, only to find in the end that this is merely a socially and psychologically conditioned ideology. Or even if it may be possible to affirm some group of presuppositions as our own by an act of conscious decision, as I believe the "Existentialists" would say, yet it may be impossible to bring any objective or critical judgment to bear on them.

But are these the only alternatives? This would be vigorously repudiated by those who hold that there can be a systematic and universally valid science of metaphysics. The best-known upholders of this view at present are the neo-Thomists. I believe that for many people at the present time neo-Thomism is one of the main intellectual alternatives; they see in it the one coherent and rational philosophy in an age of unreason. For this reason, and also because it can serve as a notable example of a metaphysics which claims to be a "science," I shall now spend a little time in commenting on it. I cannot, of course, give any detailed exposition,<sup>1</sup> since my purpose here is only

<sup>1</sup> I have attempted a fuller discussion in Chapter IX of my *Nature of Metaphysical Thinking*.

to try to call attention to some of the main issues in considering world outlooks. Even so, the points I shall be raising may seem rather technical. But Thomism is a highly technical and exacting intellectual discipline; and those who declare for the Thomist world outlook ought to be prepared for close and systematic reasoning. It is a world outlook which least of all should be adopted as a kind of party line by those not prepared to make the effort to follow rigorous metaphysical argument. Students of Thomism may feel that my difficulties can be satisfactorily answered in terms of their own philosophy. If so, good luck to them. But I have not myself found any satisfactory answer in Thomist literature. This may well be due to my own ignorance, but if there are such answers, I shall be grateful to have my attention called to them.

My first difficulty is one of principle. Can there, in fact, be such a thing as "ontology," or a "science of pure being"? A science must have some definite subject-matter marked out from other subject-matters. But in the notion of "pure being" we come to something so general that there is nothing about it to distinguish it from anything else (cf. R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Metaphysics*, pp. 13 *et seq.* on this). Can the philosophers of "being as such," from Parmenides to the Thomists, therefore, when pressed tell us much more than that "It is what it is"?

What more the Thomists do try to tell us depends on their analysis of Being in terms of the Aristotelian conception of Actuality and Potentiality. But I find it difficult to see that this is a satisfactory analysis of beings as we know them in the world of nature and human life. I cannot help thinking this analysis is bound up with the Aristotelian view of the world as containing a limited number of fixed kinds or species, all growing towards the realization of their specific essences. But does this allow there can be real novelty within nature or indeed human nature? A process or an action would always be the realization of so much potency, thought of as the fulfilment of a fixed type. This seems to commit us to a view of real specific essences; and does this allow sufficiently for the possibility of the emergence of new species, or even for the facts of individuality; and does it allow for the extent to which any process of development depends, not just on the unfolding and the subject's own inner potencies, but on its interrelation with other processes going on in its environment, which may be "ingredients" (to use a word of Whitehead's) in its development? I think Whitehead puts the point when he asks whether we should look on the study of nature as a study of the "procession of forms" or of the "forms of process." Thomists must be able to convince us that once we give up the conception of fixed species in nature it is possible still to hold to the idea of real essences; or indeed that the belief in real essences is itself justifiable.

## THE CHOICE OF A WORLD OUTLOOK

Another difficulty I find is this: Thomists claim to give a rational explanation of the world, by saying that it is an empirically given fact that the world exists; that its existence is contingent, i.e. it is logically conceivable that it might not have existed; and that therefore there must be a *cause* of its existence in a Necessary Being which must exist, as it were, in its own right. But this argument raises various questions, such as whether we can properly apply the notion of Cause, which is a notion of inductive explanation applicable to sequences of events within the world, to the world as a whole. Of course you may say, need we necessarily restrict the word in this way? But in view of the difficulties that have been found in the notion of Cause by philosophers in the last two generations, I think we must agree that William James was abundantly justified when he remarked that "Causation is too obscure a principle to bear the whole superstructure of Theology." Moreover, even though any empirical existences within the world taken severally may be contingent, yet it is conceivable that the world as a whole might be found to be a necessary system, so that we should have not the First Cause of Thomist theologians but something like the *Deus sive Natura* of Spinoza.

It might then be said that some other system of rationalist metaphysics, for instance the system of Spinoza, might succeed where the Aristotelian-Thomist system fails (if we admit that it does fail). Spinoza's system is based on the belief that the world as a whole is ultimately self-explanatory, and he puts this by saying that the world as a whole, which can be called *Deus sive Natura*, is a single Substance, and that by Substance is meant that which exists in itself and is explained through itself (*id quod est in se et per se concipitur*). But is there any way of demonstrating that the world as a whole is a Substance of this kind, any more than of demonstrating the Thomist analysis of the world into finite contingent substances dependent on a First Cause which is a transcendent Necessary Being? I am far from saying that the difference between these two types of view is merely a verbal one depending on different ways of defining the term "Substance." They represent alternative ways of looking at the world, and arguments can be brought forward for both. But since the arguments of neither are conclusive as against the other, can either claim to be a logically demonstrable science of Being?

But need we admit that all that exists is logically necessary (as with Spinoza)? Or, if we say that something exists and might not have existed, can we pass from that to the conclusion that something else must exist (as with Thomism)? Is there not another alternative, namely to accept the fact that "something exists" with what Professor Alexander called "natural piety" and then give the best general description we can of it? This, of course, might be called "irrational"



## PHILOSOPHY

world view. It may be that no world view of a metaphysical kind (such as Theism or Dialectical Materialism) can ever finally be verified or falsified by appeal to empirical fact. But we must be ready to ask whether, in order to maintain a particular view, we find it necessary to ignore or explain away certain ranges of empirical facts. It is, of course, possible to go to considerable lengths in explaining away; for instance the old marine biologist father in Edmund Gosse's *Father and Son* managed to square the facts of the fossils he discovered in his scientific work with a world outlook which contained a fundamentalist view of Genesis by saying that the Lord may have created the world as a going concern, containing fossils with all the signs of great age (that He may, as it were, have been a skilful faker of antiques). Let no one think that this kind of argument is restricted to the pious. Voltaire found that the presence of molluscs and sea-shells on the tops of inland mountains was being used as evidence for a real Flood (as recorded in Genesis). So he brought forward a number of ingenious explanations of how they could have got there; such as that they might have been cockles dropped from the hats of pilgrims, or have once formed part of a gentleman's collection. But sooner or later, if we go on facing empirical fact, this kind of theory will labour under a strain which may be found to be unbearable, and the critical point may occur when it becomes clear to us that we must alter our fundamental convictions. It may be that to recognize when this point has been reached is not merely a matter of recording further observations, but is a judgment of conscience. The relation between empirical facts and wider schemes of interpretation is a very difficult question: it may in fact be the main way in which the problem of what used to be called "metaphysics" comes home to us. But I do not believe that any solution of this problem is satisfactory which does not fully recognize the necessity of the discipline of taking account of empirical fact as far as it will take us.

How far will it take us? It might be said that as far as it takes us we have science in the broad sense. And therefore it could be said to follow from what I have said that a world outlook should include a general account of the knowledge of nature supplied by science up to date. In principle I believe this is right, but in practice it is questionable whether there is a unified scientific account of the world, or whether there are not simply sciences, describing different bits of nature and perhaps describing them at different levels. That there should be some unified general picture emerging from the work of the sciences is highly desirable. Whether we can have one at the present time is a question for philosophically minded scientists to answer. The difficulty, as it appears to a non-scientist like myself, is that it looks as though some of the basic presuppositions of science were undergoing a fairly drastic overhauling. (I have in mind con-

## THE CHOICE OF A WORLD OUTLOOK

cepts such as the "uniformity of nature," "causality," "natural law," the concept of matter), and until this process has gone rather further and the new fundamental ideas have been more clearly established, it is hard to see just what the "scientific world outlook" consists in. Moreover, it seems necessary to accept, and not to obscure, the real diversities between the different levels on which nature is studied, and which are generally called matter, life, and mind. It is, of course, possible that new border-line sciences such as biophysics or biochemistry may at any time throw more light on the relations between at any rate the two former, and make possible some new generalization, for instance showing us nature as consisting of different types of organized activity, in a way which will do justice to the real diversities of these different types, and yet show the relation between them in some intelligible way. But I think we must say that this is still speculative, and we cannot yet really speak of a "unified scientific view of the world."

And even if we could, would this take us all the way? This is perhaps where the philosopher comes in. For the philosopher is concerned to point out that "the scientific outlook" is an interpretation given by the mind of man to his empirical discoveries about the world in which he lives. In the last resort therefore it is necessary to re-unite the scientific account with the existence of man as thinker and agent. To do this, our world outlook will have to take account not only of nature as science describes it, but also of the other ways, such as the ethical, aesthetic and religious, in which man as thinker and agent experiences his world. There are, of course, many different ways of trying to explain or interpret these forms of experience, and it is not my job here to pronounce on them. But I should say with emphasis that no world outlook can stand which ignores their existence, or fails to give a plausible account of their distinctive characteristics. There are, of course, attempts to account for them all in terms of what are believed to be general scientific ideas, the most widely known of which at present is C. H. Waddington's. Those who are considering this world outlook should be prepared to reckon seriously with the objections to it which have been pointed out by thinkers such as C. D. Broad and A. D. Ritchie, and be quite sure that they have a satisfactory answer to them. It will not do to call a world outlook "scientific" because it can bring natural and ethical phenomena under the same concepts, if those concepts were in fact derived from analogies with human actions and purposes in the first place and read back into the natural world. The concept of "evolutionary progress" may be a case in point.

This brings me to another test which should be applied to a world outlook will it stand up to a very close critical scrutiny of its fundamental concepts? We can learn a great deal here from following the

## PHILOSOPHY

thinking of the older metaphysicians. For all too often world outlooks may be drawn in terms of loose concepts; analogies and metaphors used without realizing that they are analogies and without therefore looking to see whether they are good analogies. Amongst a few of those in vogue at present which need watching, I would instance "dynamic," "evolution," "field," "pattern," "dimension."

The next corrective against letting a world outlook be a mere ideology I believe lies in our having a genuine concern for truth and reality. I have spoken of the discipline of empirical accuracy; I now want to go on and say something more "metaphysical" than this. It may be difficult to see what is meant by a concern for truth and reality in any "metaphysical" sense if we are prepared to say that a world outlook must be based on our experience; that experience is always partial and fragmentary, and that our interpretations are bound to be coloured by personal factors and also by the conditions and climate of thought in which we live. But when we have allowed that, for all these reasons, we must be prepared for a certain relativism in world outlooks, I believe that there is still a real dividing line between those who are content that their world outlook should be simply the expression of an attitude of mind, and those who are attempting to make it, for all its partial nature, into an attempt to express truth. What is meant here by "truth" is a very difficult question; it may be argued that there cannot be a complete verification, or possibly a complete falsification even for any empirical statement, and so how much more difficult it is to see how a "world outlook" as a whole can be verified or falsified? But I think that here we can distinguish between *verification* and the recognition that we have an obligation to truth, and that this obligation still stands, even if verification is impossible. This may sound paradoxical, but I believe that it is no more than a recognition of the situation in which finite human beings are always placed. In morality similarly we recognize that we have an obligation to do what is right, but we can never know for certain that what we believe we ought to do is what is right in an objective sense. This point was put religiously by Father Kelly of Kelham, when an earnest student asked him, "But how do we know what the Will of God really is?" and he answered, "That's the giddy joke: we don't." I believe that our world outlooks, as well as our moral decisions, are involved in this giddy joke. But just as in morality there is a real difference between those who just accept relativism, and those who, while recognizing our fallibility, yet accept the obligation of conscience that they should do their best in each situation, so also in forming a world outlook there is a real difference between a mere relativism, and the kind of thinking which, in spite of being incomplete and partial, is yet carried on under the recognition of a transcendent obligation.

## THE CHOICE OF A WORLD OUTLOOK

Obligation to what? It might be said to "truth": but there is a view of truth which identifies it with the internal coherence of our interpretations of experience. I therefore said advisedly a little while ago that one of the questions concerning a world outlook is whether it expresses a genuine concern for *truth and reality*. Now "reality" is a large word, and a slippery word. It sounds impressive, but what does it mean? I am obviously meaning by it here not simply "the totality of all that is the case," since I am considering an obligation to seek something more than just empirical accuracy.

I believe that there is a real issue to be decided as between the world outlooks of those who believe that there is a transcendent reality over against us, which is what it is, and the views of those who are only concerned to achieve internal consistency. You may say that to assume the former begs a very large question: but what I am concerned to do at present is to say that I do not believe that the question is a merely verbal one, as if we were to say that the choice is merely which language we find most convenient, for instance a "material object language" or a "sense datum language." Moreover, Phenomenalism (i.e. the theory that statements about material objects can be analysed into statements about sense data, without reference to transcendent entities) is plausible as a spectator's philosophy: but when we pass from contemplation to action, our conviction that we are set in an environment on which we act and are acted upon by other things is irresistible. Perhaps Dr. Johnson was seeing this in his crude way when he tried to refute Berkeley by kicking a large stone "till he rebounded from it." It was, as Professor Price has said, a "bilateral dynamic transaction." The stone kicked back.<sup>1</sup> I believe, therefore, that when we come to consider *action* and not only states of consciousness, that the burden of proof rests with the people who deny that we have any reason to say that the objects of experience transcend experience. I am well aware that this raises all sorts of questions which I cannot go into here. I can only put the issue as one which I believe is much more than a verbal one. In weighing different kinds of world outlook we can distinguish those which make some kind of unity out of our experience and leave it at that, and those which, while allowing that our experiences are all we have to go on, yet also hold that through them we are trying to interpret reality other than ourselves. World views written in this latter spirit should be able both to convey a sense of their own incompleteness (that "leagues beyond those leagues there is more sea") and yet at the same time be rooted in an absolute obligation to respect reality.

Of course I cannot claim to be able to say that only a world outlook

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. F. Hallett, "Dr Johnson's Refutation of Bishop Berkeley," *Mind*, April 1947.

## PHILOSOPHY

which asserts some kind of ultimate realism will do. All I can ask here is whether this type of view does or does not express the human situation more adequately than those which are concerned simply with the development of internally coherent systems of thought. My own conviction about our "human situation" is that the more we think about it, the more we must be conscious that world outlooks are partial and incomplete, and since none can be all-inclusive, each will tend to put emphasis on the kinds of interest round which it is written. But the fact that we can be critically aware of these limitations means that we are conscious of an obligation both to acknowledge them and to correct them in whatever degree may be in our power. This recognition of obligation is the absolute point in any world outlook, and can be the point of stability which differing world outlooks find in common. So if I were asked to name a "unifying principle," I should say that at any rate we can find one in the mutual recognition of *conscience* among responsible thinkers. There can be no escape from complete relativism for world views which deny the authority (which is not the same as the infallibility) of conscience. For conscience is the capacity to recognize obligation, and therefore the condition for responsible thinking.

But when we have said that we must recognize both that we have a transcendent obligation and also that any world outlook will be partial, we must obviously then go on and try to make this world outlook as coherent an interpretation of experience as possible. Hence it seems that the possibility of a world outlook depends on our being able to find some unifying principle in another sense than that in which we find it in conscience, namely, we must find a co-ordinating principle of interpretation. I believe that this is generally done by taking concepts expressing relations found within certain ranges or thought or experience and extending them by analogy to others, to see whether some co-ordinated scheme can be achieved by this means. So Plato suggests that the reality of things is to be looked for in intelligible formal elements; an extension of the idea of pure forms as grasped in logic and mathematics; Aristotle finds his clue in the teleological categories of his biology. He sees the world as a hierarchy of processes, developing towards the actualizing of their complete nature. One could go on instancing particular world outlooks written round a particular type of relationship which has been selected as a unifying principle.

But since our experience is, as we have said, partial and fragmentary, and since it discloses real diversities not easily reduced by unifying principles, such principles, built as they are on analogies, are likely to become strained and break when we stretch them far. We may refuse to see this, and develop a one-sided outlook in which principles derived from the interpretation of one kind of experience

## THE CHOICE OF A WORLD OUTLOOK

are made to dominate others without any attempt to do justice to the characteristic differences of these others, and therefore to the limitation of our analogies. We then get a kind of ideology. Such as would be the inability of some of the theologically trained to discuss any problem in, for instance, politics, economics or science except in theological language; or the attempt to give a "scientific" account of ethical or aesthetic experience by leaving out the characteristically ethical or aesthetic elements. (Perhaps Freudianism is a case in point.) Correctives to this kind of ideology would be a sensibility for different kinds of experience, and the metaphysical conviction which I have mentioned—namely that reality is what it is. These two correctives are likely to make us suspicious of unifying schemes, since we shall realize that any such scheme must involve a high degree of simplification. Will they prevent us achieving one at all? I think we must acknowledge that any world outlook is only possible by means of selective simplification. If therefore we are not to rule world outlooks out of court altogether we must ask at what point simplification becomes (dyslogistically) over-simplification. Here I should say that simplification is legitimate if it brings out what is important and omits or dismisses into the background what is trivial or mere matter of detail. This holds whether we are presenting a subject in words or in painting, or whether we are trying to give an "interpretation" of the world. For most people are not interested to be told that reality "is what it is," nor to be told that empirically it is "the totality of all that is the case." What they want when they talk about "reality" are some pegs on which to hang their thinking; something they can feel is important, and in Lord Balfour's phrase "really real." Otherwise if they feel that nothing is important, that nothing really matters, the sense of triviality soon slides into a sense of unreality.

### Unreal City

Under the brown log of a winter dawn,  
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,  
I had not thought death had undone so many.

Eliot writes in *The Waste Land* that epitome of the modern sense of triviality. Wordsworth had also felt baffled and confused amid the vastness of London. The picture of the great city was "unmanageable," yet he found

It is not wholly so to him who looks  
In steadiness, who hath among least things  
An under-sense of greatest, sees the part  
As part, but with a feeling of the whole.<sup>1</sup>

Is not this exactly what people ask of a world outlook? They feel that our accumulated mass of factual information has become

<sup>1</sup> Prelude VII, 733-36 My attention was called to this latter passage by Professor J. W. Harvey

"unmanageable." They want not just an intellectual scheme, but something which gives them a sense of the relative importance of things, which gives them among least things "an under sense of greatest," which will help them, as we say, to see things in proportion. But can this be supplied? For it may be said that the feeling for what is important may be amongst the most subjective of our judgments, and may we not just be reading our interests and preferences into the universe?

But does "importance" always mean an emphasis put on something because it is relevant to some interest or purpose in our part? Often it is so; if I want to catch my train it is important for me to leave the house now. But is it important that I should catch my train? Yes, perhaps, as a means to my carrying out some plan or engagement. But is the plan or engagement important? We shall be driven back in the end to the question of whether it is possible to say that some ends or purposes are absolutely more important than others, or whether the word "important" simply expresses our own emotional preoccupation. I think that we are quite sure that sometimes it must mean more than this. I am quite sure that the success of the Peace Settlement is more important than my success in this lecture, although at the moment I am emotionally preoccupied with the latter. On what kind of objective grounds can we justify this conviction? First, I should say that which is important makes a difference; it may make a difference to a number of other things, and make it in a decisive way. On the other hand, "that which makes no difference" can be taken to be the vanishing point both of importance and of reality. *It does not really matter.*

There are various ways in which things can make a difference. It may be by creating commotion and disturbances; it may be occasionally (even in these days!) by creating possibilities of order. When we pass from events or occurrences to *ideas*, we can also say that an important idea is one which makes a difference in a decisive way, as, for instance, Copernicus' hypothesis of the motion of the earth. Other ideas or theories have to be interpreted or reinterpreted with reference to this as a key idea; but it itself cannot be satisfactorily explained in terms of the others.

The ideas which serve as unifying principles in world outlooks have to be "important" ideas in this sense. It has to be possible to show that a co-ordinated map of our knowledge of the world can be achieved by reference to these as key ideas. (So Alexander uses the key ideas of space-time, emergence and quality.) But of course it is always possible that the unifying principles may be too narrow, or that the philosopher's power to produce a co-ordinated world outlook in terms of them may reduce itself to his ability to create a skilful composition. I believe a corrective here is what I have called the

## THE CHOICE OF A WORLD OUTLOOK

realist sense: that in the end reality is what it is, and although we must inevitably base our *interpretation* of reality on some selective judgment of what we hold to be important, we must not use these judgments as *definitions* of what is real. I believe that the latter tendency is found in some idealistic world views, which tend to define reality in terms of Value, or "to seek in what should be the ground of what is" (Lotze). But if we restrict our ideas of reality to what we judge to be important, reality itself may give us some unexpected shocks.

Another consideration may be to ask whether there is not another aspect to "importance." An important idea may be one which can be shown to be a possible co-ordinating idea; this is theoretical importance. There is also practical importance, which I have suggested may be described in terms of making a difference on a wide scale, or in a decisive way. But I think importance may sometimes have another aspect, which I shall call "achievement," and contrast with triviality. The sense of triviality, we have said, can be the most devastating form of scepticism. Hence it is often allied with the sense of unreality. If nothing really matters, then perhaps nothing is real, or at any rate "really real." But a corrective to the sense of triviality is to appreciate something which has achieved some measure of excellence. When this is on a sufficient scale we call it greatness. So among the things which we can judge important in an absolutist sense, i.e. we can say that they "really matter," are not only those which make a difference, but those which are in some sense achievements of excellence. If we think of the specific kinds of excellence proper to human beings, we can name achievements in character, in the products of the imagination, as in art or literature, and in actions which shape decisively man's life in society. In all these "importance" can mean not only relevance to some end or interest, but some measure of definite achievement. For its proper contrast would be not the irrelevant but the trivial. I believe that no world outlook can stand which does not sustain our sense of the importance of these things. This does not necessarily mean that we "read our values into the universe." For unless we are very blind or lacking in candour we must, I think, admit that some things or actions do achieve a quality which calls for admiration (not often, perhaps, but sometimes). And therefore, being human, our part in the world should be to cherish or promote these things. Here let me say that, while I do not think that we ought to expect a world outlook to entail a particular programme, I believe that it ought to help us to define our attitude to political and social action by clarifying the kinds of things we think are important in the sphere of "human values," which is the sphere with which politics is so concerned. But neither do I believe that a world outlook should be so parochial as only to be interested in "human values." It



should try in some way to see them in relation to the non-human universe. In this regard I should say that I do not believe that "human values" are logically dependent on a theistic metaphysics. They can be sustained by various types of world outlook. But I believe that there is a difference between the world outlooks which, in recognizing the importance of these values, are centred in man, and those which are able both to sustain our sense of that importance, and yet at the same time to express a sense of man's dependence on a greatness in the universe other than that of his own achievements—a sense expressed in some of the religious world outlooks by the word "creatureliness." I do not think that even such world outlooks are necessarily theistic, at any rate in the ordinary sense (it may be that the nicest thing ever said of any metaphysician was said to Alexander by Claude Montefiore, "You walk so humbly with your funny God"). But whether they can be labelled "theistic" or not, I believe that there is a recognizable difference between the world outlooks which convey this quality and those which do not. And those which do so can sustain our sense of importance without its being tainted by self-importance.

Philosophy is often popularly held to be a means of making us realize our insignificance, "that we are not particularly important." There is a truth in this, if it means that it should find ways of bringing home to us a sense of the incredible vastness of the world both in space and time. The sense for this has certainly not grasped the popular imagination, or even the imagination of many philosophers. Some world outlooks might even be suspected of being protective mechanisms against it. But I believe that no world outlook which presents man's life in the universe as merely trivial can be adequate: not just adequate to our self-esteem, but adequate to the facts of the achievements of certain lives and minds which call out our admiration (unless we are, I believe, not really too humble, but too conceited to be willing to admire).

Of course the people interested in world views will not only be philosophers and metaphysicians, and a good deal of what I have said may have sounded somewhat technical, and relevant only to the particular concerns of philosophers. But I have been trying throughout the discussion to disentangle some considerations which may be brought to bear on any world outlook. The discussion is therefore addressed to those who want seriously to weigh and judge world outlooks, and not simply to toe the party lines of fashionable ideologies. I have admitted that I do not believe that there is any decisive way in which world outlooks can be verified or falsified. Nevertheless I have tried to find certain considerations which can relevantly be applied in judging them. Let me summarize these.

## THE CHOICE OF A WORLD OUTLOOK

(i) The respect shown for empirical facts in so far as these can be established by experiment and research.

(ii) The respect for objectivity, as shown not only by respect for empirical fact, but also by a belief that there is reality beyond ourselves. This sense may best be conveyed if it is possible to sustain a realist metaphysics, in which the objects of experience transcend experience. But any world outlook, whether realist or not, ought to convey the impression of being an "open system."

(iii) The willingness to recognize that, since a world outlook must depend on an interpretation of experience, and since experience is always partial, a world outlook must be to some extent partial and incomplete. It will also be affected by the kind of thought forms available to the thinker.

(iv) Along with this should nevertheless go a recognition of obligation to truth which will make the thinker critical of his own partiality, though he knows that he can never completely transcend it.

(v) Since the obverse side of a critical awareness of our own partiality is an awareness of obligation, no world outlook which includes a view of man such as would make it impossible for him to recognize obligation can be a critical view.

(vi) In presenting a world outlook we must not ignore the fact that it is a construction of thought, and therefore we must be able in the end to include man himself as thinker and agent in the picture.

(vii) A world outlook may be presented in terms of certain key ideas drawn in the first place from the interpretation of one kind of experience, and it must be shown to be possible to extend these as co-ordinating principles without doing violence to the known diversities between different kinds of experience.

(viii) A world outlook, if it is to be presented or grasped at all, must be a simplification drawn up by means of a selective judgment as to what is important. It should be possible to defend this judgment by showing that other things are explicable with reference to those on which attention has thus been focused.

(ix) There may be some things which we judge to be important because they call out the special admiration due to excellence. The meaning of the world may not be exhausted by, or even centred in, the particular excellences open to human beings. But nevertheless, since we are human beings, these things are our special concern, and therefore no world outlook which does not convey a concern to foster them can be adequate.

(x) A world outlook should sustain the sense that life is im-

## PHILOSOPHY

portant and not merely trivial. But importance is not the same as self-importance.

Of course I should not claim that this list is complete. You may be able to add to it, and I shall be very glad if you can. You may also dispute some of my points. But if any considerations such as these I have mentioned enter into the choice of a world outlook, I think we can say that it can be a matter for reasoned and responsible judgment. It need be neither a merely arbitrary decision nor just the result of temperamental predilection. Even though we may not be able to claim logical certainty in our ultimate convictions, as was claimed by some of the older metaphysicians, we need not be given over in such matters to complete irrationality.

# PSYCHOLOGY AND THE MORAL PROBLEMS OF OUR TIME<sup>1</sup>

W. J. H. SPROTT, M.A.

THE title of this lecture, as it stands now, is "Psychology and the Moral Problems of Our Time." When I received the extremely flattering invitation to address you, the proposed title was "Light from Psychology on the Moral Problems of Our Time," and as I am not by any means sure that Psychology throws a very clear light upon our problems, I begged that the title might be toned down. I say this at the outset, because I am afraid that you may be disappointed by the emptiness of the psychological cupboards—at any rate so far as illumination upon the moral problems of our times is concerned, and if I were to appear before you claiming to be a torch-bearer, you would be justified in accusing me of false pretences.

To begin with, I was myself taken in by the sonorous simplicity of the latter half of the title: "Moral Problems of Our Time." Surely, I thought, they are obvious enough. The austerity we endure is not a virtuous exercise in self-denial, it is attributed to the wickedness and culpable stupidity of other people. The uneasy suspicion which pervades the intercourse of statesmen in international affairs, the fear of war, the atom bomb, all these, it may be said, show that there is something wrong, and we readily pass to the proposition that if only men were more good, then things would not be as they are. The fact is, so men say, that our moral stature does not match our scientific knowledge.

Now, if I may make a personal confession: I find that I always start by accepting the sonorous, and then I find myself eyeing it with deepening suspicion. To speak of the moral problems of our time seems to imply that there are problems of a moral nature which are special to *our* time and not to other times, and there is, I think, a faint hint that we are somehow worse now than men of past ages, that there has been a decline in morality. If this is meant, I am not at all satisfied that it is true. I should have thought that never were more people disturbed by, and interested in, the welfare of more people. The enormous increase in our social services and the enthusiasm with which young men and women take up social work of all kinds: the probation service, the services of hospital almonery, the profession of personnel management and so on, ought not to be ignored. Nor should we forget the reasoned and sympathetic attitude which an

<sup>1</sup> Lecture delivered at the Royal Institute of Philosophy, October 31, 1947, in the series "Moral and Political Conflicts of Our Time."

increasing number of persons take towards the proper treatment of criminals, both old and young, and the time and money which we are prepared to expend in improving the institutions in which such persons are treated. No one who has lived near a prisoner of war camp can fail to have noticed the sympathy aroused by the prisoners, and, I would add from my experience, the *reasoned* sympathy, not mere soppiness, but a sympathy which takes account of the claims a victor nation may have on the nationals of the conquered one to repair the damage they have done. And this sympathy and interest finds expression in all classes of the community. Furthermore, I would urge that those who accuse our time of being one of degenerating morality, are sometimes influenced by what is, in fact, a sign of the reverse, namely, the enormous fuss that we make nowadays about cases of brutality, cruelty, and negligence which are brought to our notice. We have no comparative studies by means of which to check our criticism. We deplore, and rightly, broken homes, but what evidence have we that there is, in fact, a greater proportion of broken homes to-day than there were, say, one hundred years ago? We may quote the comparative statistics of divorces, but we know perfectly well that divorce is not the only way in which homes are broken. Finally, in our reflections about foreign peoples—I do not say "foreign affairs"—the amount of intelligent and sympathetic weighing of the moral issues involved in their fate does no small credit to the ever-increasing number of persons who turn their attention to such things. And I repeat that in my experience this generosity, this attempt to weigh claims justly, this striving after an enlightened attitude towards other people is to be found in all classes of the community.

I must not, however, take up any more time handing round rose-coloured spectacles. All, I would say, is not ill, but at the same time all is not well. It may be objected, for example, that although we might agree that people are generous enough, perhaps more generous than they used to be, when they contemplate the ill-fate of distinguishable groups of other persons: prisoners, displaced persons, prostitutes, homo-sexuals, Jews, Germans, the sick, the workers, factories, and so on, nevertheless, people are talking of the third war, and when it comes to putting self last and the general good of the country first, there is a regrettable lack of co-operation and enthusiasm. Spivs and drones, strikes and short hours—we shake our heads: if only. . . . If only what? If only everyone were imbued with a selfless devotion to duty and to service, if only they would put sectional disagreement and sectional advantage aside, if only, in fact—everyone approximated to the ideal type of the professional soldier, then, though economic difficulties would have to be overcome, at least we should put up a better show than we are doing. That

think, is at least one of the things which people have in mind when they think of the moral problems of our time.

What points of psychological interest arise? I do not propose to discuss the problems of international relations, because I think the psychological problems are extremely obscure. I am not unaware of the importance of the theories which assert that our attitude towards other countries is partly determined by the fact that we use them as targets for the displacement of our domestic hates and guilts. In so far as this hypothesis is true, statesmen can rely on the efficacy of certain forms of propaganda. But I do not think that such theories, valuable as they are, go very far. We enter a world of personalities in which general psychological inquiry is of very little use, and in which our evidence is at a minimum. All we know is that fewer people can do more damage than ever before, and what will happen depends, so far as I can see, on the purposes and motives of a relatively small number of persons. And I feel that the psychological problems involved are so intimately connected with unknown details about the persons concerned that one is floored without a great deal more information.

I therefore turn to the other problems, delinquency and the absence of a selfless devotion to toil, and I want to begin with a descriptive formula of human personality. I would provisionally describe a human personality as a more or less integrated hierarchy of purposes operating in a setting of beliefs. Such a simplified framework does not, of course, cover all that psychologists are interested in, but I want here to emphasize certain aspects of persons. The "purposes" of which I speak are, at this descriptive level, to be considered as conscious purposes, formulated before the mind in varying degrees of concreteness. A fuller account, for which there is no time here, would distinguish between such degrees of concreteness. A man may have as his purpose, consciously presented, the giving of a good education to his children, or sending his son to a particular school next term; a man may want to get something to eat, or go to a specific restaurant; and so on. What I wish to emphasize is that a man's purposes at the descriptive level have some concreteness, in the sense that they are couched in terms of the possibilities open to him in the society of which he is a member. The desire for food, the desire to make money are, I suggest, never abstract, but always present themselves either in terms of a specific mode of satisfaction, or as implying in the background certain relatively concrete alternative modes of satisfaction.

By "hierarchy" of purposes I mean (a) that some purposes *in fact* prove dominant over others in the sense that they consistently triumph in the case of conflict, and (b) that a man regards certain purposes as having higher value than other purposes. By "integra-

## PHILOSOPHY

tion" I mean the degree to which there is consistency in a man's general conduct, the degree to which certain dominant purposes are pursued, so that other purposes, while having their time and place in a man's life, do not interfere with those upon which he sets most store.

Now psychologists, who have turned their attention to this aspect of human behaviour, have formulated hypotheses in terms of which the actual purposes of which a man is aware, and which he certainly thinks he is aiming at, are to be interpreted. We have at least three kinds of theory: (1) Theories which classify purposes on the basis of crude similarities, such as food-getting ones, assertion ones, aggressive ones, and so on, and then put forward the hypothesis of determining tendencies, urges or instincts which correspond to the classification, and are regarded as the dynamic energies forcing people to act in certain directions. (2) A second type of theory is like the first, but the classification is much less expected. Purposes which appear to be very unlike one another are said to be energized by the same so-called "real" motive, whether we recognize it or not—and usually not. The evidence for such hypotheses is, of course, extremely complicated, and the content of such hypotheses varies from one school of thought to another. (3) A third type of theory interprets our purposes in terms of social forces: class warfare, it may be, or a culture-pattern which imposes itself upon us. Now I wish to say emphatically that all these types of theory have been of very great value in rendering human purposes intelligible. Such investigations are of the utmost importance, but there is a danger, I think, of losing sight of the concrete purposes as they present themselves in consciousness, and I believe these to be of importance, too. It may well be that a person thinks he is pursuing a certain purpose, while his actions give the lie to his protestations, and the discovery of the unconscious motivating agency is of enormous value, but we run the risk of ignoring the fact that he not only cannot acknowledge his so-called "real" motive, but that he *does* have to present himself with a purpose which he regards reputable. The fact that men have to justify their actions in their own eyes, and feel they must also do so in the eyes of others, seems to me of importance. To say that he is really "*only*" satisfying a motive so discreditable that he cannot face up to it because his *super ego* is threatening to castrate him if he does, is only to tell part of the story. Again, to turn to two very different theories but of the same type, I am not satisfied when M. Sartre tells me that if I do not consciously despair, it is because my condition is so parlous that I dare not contemplate it, or when Dr. Fromm tells me that if I do not feel lonely it is because I am so unnerved by my real solitude that I must thrust it from my mind. I am still old-fashioned enough to think that what I am conscious of

## PSYCHOLOGY AND MORAL PROBLEMS

is not wholly worthless as a testing-ground for psychological hypothesis.

Turning to the first of my types of theories, the simple instinct theory: it keeps closer to conscious experience, and, admittedly, loses thereby in interpretive interest, but even here there are dangers. Instincts or urges are recklessly multiplied, and the multiplication is not uninfluenced by the notion of what would be advantageous if it were true. I have read, for instance, of an instinct or urge to work, and the suggestion has been made that personnel management is a device to remove the obstacles which thoughtless employers have put in the way of that urge finding full expression. I should require a good deal of evidence in terms of conscious purpose before I accepted that hypothesis. Finally, I fight shy of social determinants which represent members of societies as puppets moved by social forces. I cannot deny such forces, but I think we ought to seek explanation in terms of the interactions of individual purposes before we fall back upon such unverifiable entities.

On these grounds I feel that in spite of the vast importance of the hypothesis of unconscious motivating forces we shall do well not to ignore the common-sense level of conscious desire.

Now let me return to my picture of the personality as a more or less integrated hierarchy of purposes. We have, I think, as a kind of ideal, a man whose dominant purposes are those which he and we regard as respectable, and so far integrated that he pursues these righteous ends without interference from purposes of a lower order. People often talk as though the achievement of such an integrated personality were the easiest thing in the world, and express astonishment when others fall short in any marked degree. To my mind, it is far more remarkable that so many of us are as admirable as we are, than that there are several people who have not made the grade. With all the intellectual ability at our disposal, and the fact that we are not likely to be suspected, it does us credit that we behave as well as we do. Now one of the ways in which psychology is concerned with the moral problems of our time has to do with the factors which prejudice this development. The problem is two-fold: what prejudices integration, and what prejudices the establishment of reputable purposes? The inquiry may be pursued under four headings: (1) constitutional factors may be involved; (2) a factor of maturation may be involved; (3) personal relations between child and parent are undoubtedly involved; and (4) the opinions, beliefs, conduct, opportunities, and assumptions a child comes across inside and outside his home are undoubtedly involved. There may be constitutional factors of emotionality or emotional instability, which make integration difficult where such factors are found, and the technique of factorial analysis combined with genetic theory is of importance in this



## PHILOSOPHY

context. The maturation factor is, I think, of interest, and I would remind you of the "follow-up" studies of the Gluecks,<sup>1</sup> who wanted to find out whether juvenile penal institutions in America really were responsible for such successes as they claimed. They came to the conclusion that the evidence of reformatory influence was by no means clear, and they made the suggestion that perhaps social adaptation is something which proceeds, as it were, by "nature" in most of us, that some of us are retarded at certain significant ages, but that in a matter of some seven years the retarded can catch up, having, as they put it, "gotten delinquency out of their system." The third factor, the personal relations between a child and its parents, is obviously important as facilitating or impeding integration, particularly when one contrasts consistent behaviour of both parents with inconsistent behaviour on the part of one or both, or behaviour in one which is inconsistent with that of the other. I think it is generally agreed that the stability of a personality is facilitated if the immediate family environment is stable. These factors which may be concerned in the achievement or otherwise of satisfactory integration are doubtless powerful, but, from the point of view of "our time" as distinct from any other time, I think the fourth factor, the opinions, beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and evaluations which a person meets with in the behaviour and expressions of people with whom he comes in close contact is of greater interest. At this point I wish to put the following rough generalizations before you: (1) If a variety of alternative ways of behaving are presented as equally possible, it is harder to centre our purposes round one single aim; (2) if among this variety there is a contrast between immediate satisfactions of what a person may regard as a "lower" nature, and remoter satisfactions of a "higher" nature, the immediate satisfactions have a strong attractive force, the attraction is the greater, the more intense the satisfaction, and, again, it is harder to achieve an integrated personality, whose main purposes are these remoter and "higher" ones (3) if money is a preoccupation among those about you, as a standard of value, then enterprises which bring easy money, or the chance of winning a fortune for sixpence will have a pull; and (4) if these attraction competitions can be backed with plausible argument they are thereby rendered the stronger in their appeal; (5) so far from their being an urge to work, as such, any excuse is better than none to undermine the force of those purposes, the carrying out of which demands distasteful activity.

These generalizations are very rough; they require more elaborate formulation, and I cannot pretend that they are in any way profound. I have set them forth, however, because I think that they

<sup>1</sup> Glueck, S. and E. T.: *After-Conduct of Discharged Offenders*, University of Cambridge English Studies in Criminal Science (Macmillan, 1945).

operate particularly in our time. I suggest that those of us who have achieved some sort of integrated law-abiding personality which, with some kind of consistency, puts conscientious service to our jobs or to the community before cheating or striking, are fortunate in having been brought up with people who took that kind of thing for granted and never seriously considered any alternative. The professional classes, the civil servants, have developed a code, which excludes a great many purposes, not merely as courses of action to be contemplated but rejected, but as, in some sense, "*unthinkable*." They have accepted their own professional code, and what we might call the "gentry tradition," with its long history of paternal responsibility for public affairs, and its assumption of being the ruling class, and therefore involved, however indirectly, in the affairs of the nation. What I am suggesting is that we are as good as we are largely because it has never seriously occurred to us to do anything else. When my friend Norman, a window cleaner, who has done many other things, said to me the other day: "I say, as a matter of fact, how much can you fiddle on your job?" I had to admit that I had never given the matter any thought. He looked at me with friendly pity: a spiv *manqué*. Now in other walks of life, what with scientific progress, increased communication, gas meters, and the heightened mobility of ideas, a far greater range of enterprises is opening up than ever before. It is not merely a matter of lads robbing an orchard, you can get a car and carry off sacks full; you know someone who did it and got away with it, and made a pretty penny. And why not? "Whose apples are they, anyway? What right has old so-and-so to have so many apples? I bet he fiddles with his income tax return." This trivial example is merely to be taken as a paradigm of my contention that a wider range of seriously thinkable purposes, near-legal and illegal, present themselves nowadays. The immediate returns are larger; you can make quick money and therefore feel that you have scored over the mugs; there are plenty of plausible excuses current, and all this makes good law-abidingness more difficult to achieve. This, I believe, to be the case particularly in the economic field, and I think it would be a mistake to generalize over the whole field of human activity and relationships. Norman, again, was instructing me about how to cheat customers if I went into the firewood business in which he was then engaged—all about delivering 12 bags when 14 have been paid for, and the misleading but ingratiating gestures you should make. I said: "But it sounds to me like stealing two bags." "Oh, no," says he, scandalized, "it's in the way of business. I mean everyone in the way of business has got to fiddle; it's how they make their living." Now as a *bon père de famille*, as a companion and among friends, Norman is as impeccable as any other delinquent.

## PHILOSOPHY

While, however, I think that consistent goodness is more difficult to achieve, for the reasons I have given, I do not know how far consistent badness is on the increase. The wide guy, who measures *everything* by its contribution to his width, is, I should have thought, rarer than is often supposed.

Turning now to the problem of working for the community, we are, I suggest, faced with much the same factors in a different context, but with an important additional one. There are those, as I have said, who perpetuate the conscientious social service—though they may not call it that—of a responsible ruling class: Business men doubtless preserve their high regard for work, and a sense of identification with the nation and Empire, the prosperity of which is so closely linked with their own, though here excuses for inaction are accumulating. "I should like to do what I can, but the Government won't let me," or "Wot, more forms?" And I suspect that if one looked, one would find a growing sense of apathy and hopelessness, due to frustration. It is when we come to the vast multitudes of working men and women that we find new hitherto unthought-of alternatives presenting themselves once more. In the past, I suggest, the masses of the people worked because they had to, because life was like that. There was no widespread sense of the real possibility of doing anything else, or materially altering your conditions of labour. All that has changed. They are organized and can make themselves felt; they are articulate, and they have an idea of themselves as exploited. The notion of a sensible working man as being one who does as little work for as much as possible is widely current. The irritating sense of being patronized by people who come to do them kindnesses—which finds expression in the defensive: "I don't mind," or "You *can* do," when assistance is offered—has given place to a demand for such services as a right; they must be *free* in every sense, why should we work for them? There is a sort of parvenu spirit abroad: "They're not going to mess us about any more; we'll show them who is boss now." The old class structure has gone haywire; incomes no longer parallel status even to the extent that they did in the past, so that new luxuries and new standards of life are envisaged.

There has, too, been a change in the cultural climate of the working classes. Anyone who has had much to do with adult education will recognize the old stalwarts of the movement. Those who survive are in their sixties or seventies, products, perhaps, of the 1870 Act. In their day they were serious-minded, conscientious, working men; they had a sense of craftsmanship; they were influenced by non-conformity and rationalist humanitarianism; they had high ethical aspirations, and accepted the cultural standards of the middle classes; they wanted to improve themselves; they belonged to the "Lit. and

## PSYCHOLOGY AND MORAL PROBLEMS

and Phil.", or the Mechanics Debating Society; they read Carlyle and Emerson, and for them socialism and trade unionism were of the order of a moral crusade. Furthermore, they formed an aristocracy of labour, and they were respected by those less intellectually inclined than themselves.

Now the position is different. The ethical fervour of the nineteenth century has decayed. The desire to improve oneself has given way to the desire to better oneself. A friend of mine tells me that during a discussion on freedom with some young working men, one of them exclaimed: "B—— freedom, we want security; freedom's a bourgeois idea." In this connection we must remember that in 1925 the proportion of children from elementary schools entering grammar schools was 8.5 per cent, while to-day it is something like 16 per cent, and in some areas as high as 25 per cent, and before 1925 it was very much smaller than 8 per cent. This means that an intellectual cream is being lost to industry altogether. In the world of trade unionism, the *movement* has grown into the bureaucratic organization, providing avenues out of overalls into black coats. The organiser, the trade union official in large unions must be trained for his job, and might even be drawn from outside industry altogether, in those unions in which officials are appointed rather than elected—a device which stymies the efforts of a certain well-known group who are particularly assiduous in their attendance at branch meetings. The result is that whereas in the past the centre of gravity among the rank and file lay towards the intellectual élite, now it lies lower down towards the masses, who are beginning to feel their power, and are suspicious of their official leaders, who have moved away from them.

To this we must add that the grouping of workers in enormous industrial categories tends to reduce the sense of individual responsibility, making the problem of leadership of prime importance, while the aggregation of operatives in large face-to-face groups may well tend to heighten the suggestibility, and all the opportunities that crowd psychology offers to the orator. Such traditions as there were, favourable to work, have broken down, and those which have survived are against it—hostility and suspicion of the employer. Furthermore, the negotiator in the trade union world who is, in any case, separated from the workers, is subject to the divided loyalties of all negotiators; he must do his best for those whom he represents, and he must do the right thing for the country, on whose prosperity the welfare of everyone depends, but it is ridiculous for him to make an agreement which there is no chance of the rank and file respecting. In all this, I suggest, we see old horizons receding, and new effective alternatives presenting themselves, which were, at most, only dreamt of in the past.

## PHILOSOPHY

The other factor, which I mentioned as being important, is this: I doubt whether the bulk of working men have ever identified themselves with the country at large. To mention the Empire usually provokes an undue use of the second letter of the alphabet. When we reflect that such concepts as "the country" and "the Empire" are mental constructs, it is not surprising that they are, as it were, constructed differently in the minds of members of different classes of the community. During a war, perhaps, whether because they are frightened and want it to stop, or because they have displaced their aggressive attitude, outside the country, and are therefore consolidated with released libido, there may be some sense that they are Englishmen and in a common danger, but an economic crisis is no such apparent, exciting, frightening affair. How can it be? It is not so real as a bomber, and it is the fault of the authorities anyway, let *them* get us out of the mess. The dream of the British Empire is one which has inspired another section of the community, and it is, for that reason, suspect to the one we are considering. There is a dream, and one we have all heard of: when a miner was asked whether he was going to work harder after some agreement or other had been made, he replied: "Ah! on one condition—good relations with Soviet Russia. I would work fifteen hours a day for Soviet Russia."

I have not mentioned as a factor the hidden hand. I have no evidence that there is a hidden hand at work, daily sabotaging our efforts, but even if there were the significant thing would be that it had an effect.

We hear of enthusiastic rebuilding abroad, in Yugoslavia, for instance. How far this is widespread among the population it is impossible to say, but if it be present the question arises: why there and not here? I suggest these relevant differences between such a comparatively immature nation and one which has the complexity of our own: the youth and homogeneity of the surviving population, the fact that there are no obstacles in the way of identifying themselves with their nation, the absence of a history of economic friction, and the fact that rebuilding for them is a more tangibly obvious affair than it is with us. However, in the absence of evidence, such speculation is valueless, but the problem is one of psychological importance. And when it comes to speculation, it may be said that I, myself, have been generalizing in too speculative a way about our own working classes. This I admit. I agree that all I have said requires verification, and indeed I would urge that if we intend to persuade the working classes to work harder and not to strike, we must first find out whether I am right, or, if I am quite wrong, what are the facts of the case. That is why I have stressed a study of conscious purposes; I feel that much of our propaganda cuts no ice whatever, because it is

formulated in complete ignorance of what working men and women think and feel about their work.

When it comes to speculation about a possible future, we are indeed at sea. It may be that with a deepening crisis and experienced privation a different situation will confront us, eliciting different responses, perhaps an abject submission to a leader with all that that implies. Before we accept such a future as inevitable, there is, I think, one more thing to say. I have stressed the *difficulties* of achieving an integrated personality centred round desirable selfless purposes. I painted a black picture, and perhaps one too black. There is, however, one aspect of human conduct of which we should never lose sight, and that is the need people feel to justify their actions in terms of justice. Even the crude: "You've got to look after number one because no one else will," is a weighing of a claim. Strikers may justify their action by the weighing of a neglected claim. I venture to suggest that when claims are issues for the first time, and taken seriously for the first time, they are bound to bulk over-large in the eyes of the claimants. The point is that an element of assessment takes place. I am, you see, suggesting a feature which accompanies and softens the crude self-seeking which is first noticed, and in that, I think, lies our hope. My experience has been that the sophisticated protest that no one but a fool would do more than the minimum is accompanied by a certain uneasiness: the claims of others are not wholly disregarded, though they may well be underestimated. I think that our hopes may lie in the extension of this sense of fairness to other people, supposing our economic predicament gives us time. Of a so-called "change of heart" I am sceptical. Of a recrudescence of religious belief I am sceptical, because I very much doubt whether the majority of men deduce what course of action they should pursue from a set of beliefs about the nature of the Universe and man's place in it. Of blind enthusiasm I am positively afraid. I have, however, a certain respect for the efficacy of the human reason as an agency engaged in the making of choices, though I am only too well aware of the sectional interests against which it has to fight. One of the main obstacles to rationality, and one of great psychological interest, is the frequent absence of any common ground for rational discussion. Disagreement is naturally common enough, but disagreement implies discussability. What I am referring to is that one sometimes finds oneself in an atmosphere in which discussion itself is impossible—a world of counter-utterances and *ignoratio elenchi*—a world in which the general rules of evidence and inference simply are not. If this is merely a first stage of articulateness, well and good, but if it goes deeper than that we are, indeed, sunk. In any case, I am sure that our propagandists would do well to take note of the problem.

What I have attempted to do is to suggest that the moral problems

## PHILOSOPHY

of our time centre round the multiplicity of choices with which we are confronted, and to emphasize the need for psychological research into the way in which these choices are consciously faced by the people who have to make them. I am convinced that psychologists can only contribute to the solution of our moral problems if they do some field-work among men and women in industry and elsewhere, as well as developing ingenious hypothesis which are often—so it seems to me—based on comparatively little evidence.

# "THINKING AND MEANING"<sup>1</sup>

PROFESSOR H. H. PRICE

PROFESSOR AYER'S lecture is not only a most auspicious inauguration; it is also an important contribution to philosophy. It is perhaps the best and the most exciting work he has written, and that is saying a good deal. There is a certain theory about thought and its objects which is often hinted at in the utterances and the writings of contemporary empiricist philosophers, but so far as I know it has never before been stated in print. Mr. Ayer has stated it, clearly and in detail, with all his well-known force and felicity of style. It is a strange and rather shocking theory, very different (in appearance at any rate) from the one which most philosophers hitherto have believed. But if we are shocked by it, the shock will be salutary. The dragon has at last come clearly into view. If we resolve to accustom ourselves to it and treat it kindly, we may hope that it will transform itself by degrees into a nice gentle domestic pet, as other philosophical dragons have before.

The aim of the lecture is to discover what is meant by the statement "someone is thinking." Professor Ayer begins by formulating what he calls the most widely current view, according to which the situation described by this statement contains five different factors: (1) the person who is thinking; (2) the instrument with which he thinks, the mind or, in some versions of the theory, the brain; (3) the process of thought itself, consisting of mental acts of various kinds; (4) the medium in which he thinks, images or words; (5) the object of the thought. Mr. Ayer considers that this analysis is far too complicated, and he proposes to simplify it by getting rid of the unnecessary entities which it mentions. By the time he has done with it, only two of the original five items are left: (1) the person, and (4) the medium. The other three have been analysed away. Even the object of thought is got rid of in the end, though for a time it maintains a precarious existence as the *significatum* of the words or images which constitute (4). As for item (1), the person who thinks, I take it that this would ultimately be resolved into a logical construction out of mental events (including organic sensations), though it is not relevant to Mr. Ayer's purpose to say so. And then there would be nothing left of our original five items but a series of mental events, some of which are symbols.

<sup>1</sup> Professor A. J. Ayer's *Inaugural Lecture*, published by H. K. Lewis & Co., Ltd., London, 1947. Pp. 28 2s 6d. net.



## PHILOSOPHY

The first unnecessary entity to be removed is (2) the mind, the supposed instrument with which one thinks. Professor Ayer does not of course deny that there are mental events. Their distinguishing character, he says, is that they are private,<sup>1</sup> and that they are not located in physical space; for example, feelings and images are mental events (p. 4). But he does deny that there is any entity, called the mind, which "underlies" such events. Even if there were, he says, it could not be the instrument with which one thinks; not because we think with something else, but because the question "What does one think with?" is a misleading question. One may ask what we see with, or hear with; and one may properly answer, with our eyes or our ears. But if somebody asks the parallel question about thinking, the proper reply is that in this case there is no "with" at all. Thus the notion that there is a kind of charlady, called the mind, which does people's thinking for them, is a delusion. And the notion that there is something called a thinking faculty which does it—or that there are faculties at all—is only a more refined form of the same delusion (pp. 5-7).

Now it seems to me that we do sometimes use the word "mind" in something like the sense which Mr. Ayer objects to. We say, for example, that Jones has a good mind, or a first-class mind, or a powerful mind; and it would be agreed that such statements are sometimes true. What are we to make of them? In view of what he says later, I think Mr. Ayer should reply that "the mind" in this usage refers to our capacity for using symbols, a capacity partly innate and partly acquired. Some people are very good at using symbols, and they are said to "have good minds"; others are less good at it. A capacity, to be sure, is not something which one uses as one uses a pair of tongs, or even as one uses one's eyes. To suppose that it is, was just the mistake of the Faculty Psychologists. But still it is something which one *has*, in an intelligible sense of the word "have." Nor is it altogether true that in the case of thinking there is no "with" at all—nothing "with which" we think. It is natural to say that we think with (by means of) symbols. A symbol, and still more a system of symbols such as the Arabic numerals, surely is something which we use, though not just in the way we use a pair of tongs. Lastly, I think that Mr. Ayer's attack on faculties is somewhat overdone. As we shall see, he has a good deal to say about *dispositions* in the later part of his lecture. A faculty is nothing but an innate or unacquired disposition. Can it be denied that every human being does have unacquired dispositions? For example, the disposition to learn from experience cannot itself be learned from experience.

<sup>1</sup> Private to whom or to what? If one holds that persons are logical constructions, this question will demand some consideration.

## THINKING AND MEANING

We may now turn to items (3) and (4) on our list: the process of thought, on the one hand; on the other, the symbols which are supposed to be its "medium." Professor Ayer is inclined to identify the two. He admits that people *may* sometimes have thoughts which they are unable to express. But this admission does not amount to much. For as he explains later (p. 10) such thoughts, precisely because they are unsymbolized, would have no objects. If so, one wonders how they can be thoughts at all. Mr. Ayer does not tell us how they can be. Perhaps he really holds that they are feelings which have a tendency to cause thoughts, without actually being thoughts themselves? However this may be, he does explicitly maintain that when a thought is expressed, i.e. symbolized, "the expressing and the thinking merge into a single process" (p. 7). Indeed, this is one of the central contentions of the whole lecture.

It might be supposed that Mr. Ayer is here identifying thinking with talking, or with other sorts of overt symbol-using, e.g. writing, making gestures, making signals. But surely we often think without expressing our thoughts by speech, writing or gestures? Moreover, when we do speak, surely there is a distinction between talking *without* thinking and talking *with* thinking (likewise when we write, gesticulate, etc.)? But those objections would be unfair. As to the first, we must distinguish between private and public symbol-usings. Certainly we may think without uttering public noises, or making public marks on paper, or public gestures. But we are still using symbols privately. For example, we may be talking to ourselves subvocally. Or we may be using verbal imagery, whether auditory or visual or kinaesthetic. Or we may even be using non-verbal imagery, as when I think of Paddington Station by means of a visual image resembling a view of that object from the south-west. (Mr. Ayer does admit that such pictorial images may be symbols, though he says very little about them.)

As to the second objection, we might be tempted to suppose that when we talk intelligently—not like a parrot or a gramophone—there are two distinct processes going on: first an inward process of thinking, and then an outward process of noise-making which is somehow controlled by it. To this Mr. Ayer would reply, like the philosophical child who was told that she must always think before she spoke, "But how can I know what I think until I hear what I say?" Of course people do sometimes think before they speak. "But all this comes to is that before saying certain words aloud they say them to themselves." A person's conversation may be "interspersed with private rehearsals" (p. 8). But they too are symbol-usings, though private ones. Are we to say that they in turn are interspersed with second-order rehearsals which are still more private? Surely not; and if we did, we could not avoid a vicious infinite regress, because these

## PHILOSOPHY

second-order rehearsals would themselves be symbol-usings. At some stage or other we must come upon a symbol-using process which is unrehearsed, i.e. to the using of symbols without the help of any previous use of symbols to "prepare" it. Then why not admit the obvious empirical fact that our public symbol-usings too are very largely unrehearsed? In other words, Mr. Ayer is pointing out that we do not just think and then produce our symbols afterwards. We think *in* producing them. And this is true whether the symbols produced are public or private.

But of course it might be suggested that there are still two distinct processes, even though concurrent: talking on the one hand (whether public or private) and thinking on the other. If the second is absent, am I not talking like a parrot after all? And if my parrot-talk happens to be private and consists entirely of auditory or kinaesthetic images, that will not make it any better. To this Mr. Ayer roundly answers that there are not two distinct processes at all. The best way to formulate his view, perhaps, is to use some adverbial expression like "thinkingly." According to him, we do not talk and at the same time perform some separate activity called thinking. We just talk thinkingly, or intelligently, whereas a parrot does not. Or we may put it the other way round and say we think verbally. At any rate, he holds that we are not producing words *and* doing something else as well. We are just producing words in a certain manner: in an intelligent or understanding way.

This brings us to the next and most devastating slash of Professor Ayer's razor, the abolition of *objects* of thought (item 5 in the traditional list with which we began). For I suppose that the main reason why philosophers have wanted to say there are acts of thinking, as well as utterances, was not that they professed to discover such acts by introspection. It was rather that when talking, privately or publicly, they claimed to have certain objects "before their minds," over and above the words; and from this they concluded that there must be certain acts of awareness directed upon such objects. Mr. Ayer will not have this at all. Instead, he suggests that all this theorizing about objects of thought is just a misleading way of telling us that symbols have meaning. "To say of a thought that it has an object is merely another way of saying that certain symbols are meaningful" (p. 11). This is perhaps the most exciting suggestion in Mr. Ayer's lecture. It is one of these suggestions which seem so obvious, once they are stated, that we wonder why nobody has ever put it in quite that way before; and this, I think, is one of the marks of true philosophical originality. It is clear that if Mr. Ayer is right, many of the epistemological problems which have plagued philosophers for centuries will simply vanish away.

## THINKING AND MEANING

He proceeds to explain very well what different sorts of symbols mean in different ways; for example, names in one way, descriptions in another. But what if the symbols are meaningless, like those alleged to have been used by Jacob Boehme when he described the unutterable? The objects of *his* thought "cannot be identified with what that relevant symbols designate, for the reason that they do not designate anything" (p. 12). One would expect Mr. Ayer to conclude that Boehme was not thinking at all, i.e. was talking unthinkingly; in which case there would be no need to ask what objects his thoughts had. This, I believe, is what Mr. Ayer would have said in the old days, when he was crusading against the metaphysicians. But he has now become more tender-hearted. He is prepared to admit that such expressions as "the Absolute" are not exactly nonsensical. He says "we have a use" for this expression, "in the sense that there are certain sentences in which it is allowed to have a place" (p. 12). Moreover, such sentences can be translated; there are other sentences, in the same or another language, which are equivalent to them. He adds that there are certain others in which the expression is *not* allowed to have a place. It would be against the rules to say "the Absolute is going short of food" (i.e. this really *would* be nonsense), though it would be in accordance with them to say "it transcends human reason." So we may allow that such expressions are "quasi-symbols" and that the sentences in which they occur express "quasi-propositions." But Mr. Ayer still insists firmly that such sentences are neither true nor false; hence the prefix "quasi-". I think this is because the rules for the use of such words as "the Absolute" are merely rules for joining those words to others, or forbidding them to be joined, and neither are nor are reducible to rules of the ostensive kind (though Mr. Ayer does not explicitly say so). I must confess to an uneasy suspicion that in this important respect they are rather like the syntactical symbols of Logic and Mathematics, such as "or" and "plus."

But we have not yet finished with objects of thought. Our thinkings are ordinarily of the kind which is expressed in a complete sentence, not in a single word or phrase. Mr. Ayer therefore proceeds to discuss what Lord Russell calls "propositional attitudes"—knowing, believing, wondering, doubting, etc. The traditional view is that each of these words stands for an act, or occurrence, and that these acts have objects. Here again Mr. Ayer proceeds to abolish both the acts and the objects. He first points out that in ordinary English the words "know," "believe," "doubt," etc., are *dispositional* words. If we say of someone "he believes that *p*" we do not ordinarily mean that he is at present engaged in an act called believing. What, then, do we mean? According to Mr. Ayer, we are making a series of hypothetical statements about what the man *would* do if he were in circum-

stances to which the truth of  $p$  was relevant, about the words he would utter if asked whether  $p$ , or some proposition entailed by  $p$ , is true, about the emphatic tone of voice in which we would utter them, etc. To take Mr. Ayer's own example: suppose one believes that the Labour Party will be returned to power at the next election. Then believing this consists in being disposed to utter these words when the subject arises, and generally in "behaving [being disposed to behave?] in a way that, in the relevant situations, is more likely to be successful if the prediction is true than if it is not" (p. 15), where "behaving" of course includes the production of various sorts of public symbols, and I think it *should* also include the formulating of them sub-vocally, and even in images (though this last is oddly called "behaviour").

This is only the beginning of Mr. Ayer's analysis, but I should like to make some comments on it at once. Suppose I am asked, not "is  $p$  true?" (Mr. Ayer has provided for that), but "do you believe  $p$ ?" How shall I answer? According to this analysis, I shall only be entitled to reply, "I *think* I believe it." I cannot say more than that. For according to Mr. Ayer I cannot discover by direct inspection what my own beliefs are. I learn that I myself believe  $p$  exactly as I learn that other people believe it, by an inductive process; by observing what I say and what I do in circumstances to which the truth of  $p$  is relevant,<sup>1</sup> and thence inferring a general rule about my utterances and actions. And the induction may well be a pretty weak one. For circumstances of the required sort may not occur at all frequently; for example, they occur very seldom with regard to the belief that the sun is larger than the moon, unless the believer happens to be an astronomer. I can indeed be pretty sure that I do have a disposition to say " $p$ " (or some equivalent sentence) and to say it emphatically. I can at any time perform the experiment of asking myself the question "whether  $p$ " even though no one else happens to ask me. But although this disposition is a part of the belief-disposition on Mr. Ayer's view, it is far from being the whole. There must also be dispositions to perform various actions, and perhaps to feel certain emotions also, for example, to feel shocked to the core if I read the sentence "not  $p$ " in the newspaper. I may *think* that I should act and feel thus if occasion arose, but I may very easily be mistaken; and therefore I can only think—not know—that

<sup>1</sup> Should this be "to which I *believe* the truth of  $p$  to be relevant"? If I mistakenly believe it to be relevant when in fact it is not, I shall talk and act in the required way. If I mistakenly believe it not to be relevant when in fact it is, I shall not speak or act in this way. But if so, the analysis seems to be circular. There is a similar difficulty about the phrase "likely to be successful" at the end of the previous paragraph. What matters is that I should *believe*, however irrationally, that the behaviour is likely to be successful.

I have the belief in question. Now there are two difficulties about this. One is that the word "think" is itself a synonym for "believe" (or "believe mildly"). And secondly, it seems obvious that we do sometimes know by inspection what our beliefs are. At any rate, almost all philosophers hitherto have supposed so. They have admitted, of course, that we often do not know whether  $p$  is in fact true. But, they have claimed, we know at least that we do believe  $p$ . Even the wildest sceptic, it is supposed, must admit that he can at least know this much, merely by attending to his own state of mind. He cannot, of course, know that he will go on believing  $p$  in future—though he may think he will, he may easily be mistaken—but at least he can know that he does believe it now.

Have philosophers been wholly wrong in making this claim? They have claimed in effect that there are *acts* of believing, and that these acts are sometimes detectable by introspection. Well, perhaps these acts should not be called acts of *believing*. The phrase is a technical one, and we may admit that the word "belief" is ordinarily used in a dispositional sense. Let us speak, instead, of acts of *assenting*, as Locke did. It seems to me clear that there are such acts (or occurrences, if the word "act" is too much to swallow), and that we are sometimes directly aware of them by introspection. And they are not just acts of utterance either, not even of emphatic utterance. For I may utter something emphatically when I am lying, or in a merely playful or dramatic manner.

But this is not the whole story. I think there *are* beliefs to which Mr. Ayer's dispositioned analysis, or something like it, does apply very well. They are what we call "unconscious" beliefs, i.e. beliefs such that their holder cannot know by introspection that he has them, and may even think erroneously that he does not have them. If we nevertheless say that he does have them, I think we are talking about the dispositions manifested in his utterances and his actions; and likewise in the images, dreams, day-dreams, emotions and the hallucinations (if any) which he experiences (for I do not think that the dispositions in question are so entirely behaviouristic as Mr. Ayer would have them). Moreover, I discover my own unconscious beliefs—when I do manage to discover them—in very much the same way as I discover the unconscious beliefs of my neighbour: by observing what I myself say, feel and do, especially when I am off my guard, and then drawing the appropriate inferences. What is wrong with Mr. Ayer's dispositional analysis, then, is this: he has supposed that what is true of "unconscious" beliefs is true of all beliefs, or that "unconscious" beliefs are the only ones there are. And in this he seems to be mistaken.

These objections are not considered by Mr. Ayer. We may now turn to one which he does consider (p. 15-16). If I believe  $p$ , must I

not sometimes actually *think of p*? Must I not have done so at least once in the past? For otherwise the dispositions, in which my belief is supposed to consist, could never have been formed. And when I did think of *p* on that occasion, must I not have thought of it with a *feeling of confidence*? If I had not thought of it with this feeling, but with some other one, e.g. a feeling of suspicion, or with none at all, the resulting disposition would not have been a belief-disposition. But this would amount to saying that there can be no belief-disposition without a previous *act* of believing (what I called an act of assenting above). Mr. Ayer replies that he is not himself sure that there is any feeling which can properly be called a feeling of confidence. It seems to me clear that there sometimes is; though of course it is not an organic sensation like a stomach-ache, and if anybody wants to identify all feelings with organic sensations, he must call this one by another name, such as "enjoyed attitude" or the like. In general, Mr. Ayer appears to hold that the question how a particular belief disposition originated in a purely psychological one, of no epistemological importance (p. 15, *ad fin.*). But if this be said, what becomes of the distinction between reasonable and unreasonable beliefs? This is not the same as the distinction between belief and knowledge, which we shall come to presently; a perfectly reasonable belief may still be false. It is clear that the word "reasonable" is not a purely psychological adjective. But it is equally clear that when we call a belief reasonable we are saying something about the way the disposition was set up. We are saying that it was set up by a certain sort of cognitive act, or series of acts; namely, by considering the evidence in favour of *p* and the evidence against it, and then deciding or making up our mind in accordance with the balance of the evidence. A belief *not* formed in this way is unreasonable, or at any rate non-reasonable, even though what is believed may happen to be true. It is very odd that Mr. Ayer says nothing at all about the distinction between reasonable and unreasonable beliefs.

We now turn to knowledge. This, too, is a disposition, not an act, according to Professor Ayer. He is inclined to think that on its subjective side it does not differ from belief. At any rate, he maintains, the actions, utterances, etc., which are its occurrent manifestations do not differ from those which manifest belief. But in other ways, he says, there is an important difference. First, a man cannot be said to know that *p*, unless *p* is in fact true, whereas what we believe may be either true or false. Secondly, in this case it is essential to ask how the disposition was acquired. We shall only say that the man knows, if the disposition was acquired "either as a result of having some experiences which justify *p*, or of his accepting certain other propositions which constitute evidence for *p* and are themselves directly or

indirectly justified by his experience" (p. 19). In the second clause I think Mr. Ayer should have said "constitute *conclusive* evidence for  $p$ " or "evidence sufficient to *establish*  $p$ " (not merely sufficient to make it more probable than not). Otherwise we shall not be able to distinguish between knowledge and reasonable belief which falls short of knowledge. But what are we to think of those "experiences which justify  $p$ "? They look to me very like what old-fashioned philosophers, in their ignorance and insensitivity to English idiom, have called "acts of knowing"! If this phrase is barred, let us call them acts of *noticing* or *discovering* instead. To put the same point another way, Mr. Ayer's word "justify" is a somewhat tricky one. If I have a certain sort of series of sense-experiences, of seeing a table from various sides and from different distances, bumping into it, etc., then the proposition that there is a table in the room will be "justified" in one sense of the word; in the sense that if those sense-experiences did occur and were sufficiently numerous and varied, and inter-related in certain ways, then the proposition that there is a table is as a matter of fact certain. But do I thereby *know* that there is a table? Not necessarily. My whole attention might be occupied in composing a sonata. It is not enough that I do in fact have those "justifying" experiences. It is also necessary that I should *notice* them or inspect them, or recognize them (I am tempted to say "know that they are occurring," but I had better forbear). Nor will it be enough if I notice them one by one. I must remember the earlier ones when the later ones are occurring. And finally—or is this too shocking?—I must perform the act which Kant called "synthesis" upon the whole lot; at any rate, I must *notice* that the contents of these successive experiences are related to each other in a certain systematic way, and it will not be enough that they are *in fact* thus related. I suggest that when we inquire into the origins of a knowledge-disposition, we shall always find that it originated in one or more acts of "noticing" or "discovering" or "recognizing." I have to put it like that, because Mr. Ayer forbids me to call them acts of knowing. But that is what they always used to be called before the year 1930; and if I were not so timid, I should like to call them that still. At any rate, whatever you call them, they are certainly *occurrences*. And it is not enough to say just that they are experiences, as Mr. Ayer does.

But what about "knowledge of"—knowledge by acquaintance as opposed to "knowledge that"? Mr. Ayer is very severe about this. No doubt the verb "to know" does sometimes govern an accusative, which is, or appears to be, the name of an entity of some kind. But in every case, he says, it can be shown that this alleged knowing of an entity is reducible either to knowing how to do something, or else to knowing that something is the case (p. 18). Now I admit that it



may be misleading to speak of *knowledge* by acquaintance; and sometimes, as when we say "he knows the way to the station" or "he knows Latin," we do mean that he knows how to do something—how to get to the station, or how to translate Latin sentences. All the same, I think that the word "acquaintance," even though not the phrase "knowledge by acquaintance," is a useful one; and I do not see how we can get on without it, or some equivalent (Mr. Ayer's own equivalent is "experience"). Moreover, even though acquaintance is not itself knowledge, it does seem to be an indispensable precondition of knowledge *that* so and so is the case, at any rate where the knowledge is empirical.

We may now turn to consider Mr. Ayer's views about what is known; we must remember that "knowledge" is now restricted to knowledge *that*, since knowledge by acquaintance has been abolished. It used to be said, in the old Realistic days, that "facts" are what we know. Mr. Ayer is very severe about facts too, and here his severity seems to be just. We do not want two worlds—the ordinary world of things and events, and another world of facts existing or subsisting alongside of it. Of course we may use the word "fact" if we like; in ordinary English we often do. "But," says Mr. Ayer, "it is a mistake to think of the facts as being 'out there' waiting to be known. For what is to be regarded as a fact will depend partly on what symbols we use" (p. 20). Partly, but of course not wholly. It will also depend upon "certain non-symbolic occurrences" (*ibid.*). In other words, when we talk of "a fact," we are really referring to a certain relational property which these non-symbolic occurrences have, the property of rendering a certain sentence true and other sentences false; and we are not referring to a peculiar entity, which somehow exists or subsists alongside of the non-symbolic occurrences. But then, I would add, there is after all something "out there"; and if it is not "waiting to be known," it is at any rate waiting to render our sentences true or false; and probably this is all that the Realistic philosophers wanted when they said—ill-advisedly—that facts themselves were out there and waiting to be known.

We now come to Section V of Professor Ayer's lecture (pp. 20-25). The issues which he raises here are so interesting and so important that they cannot be dismissed in a paragraph or two. I intend to discuss them in some detail; though I am afraid this will leave me no time to discuss the last section of all (pp. 25-28), in which even the attenuated ghost of the object—the shadowy status which it still had as that *significatum* of a symbol—is finally dissolved. (Mr. Ayer there maintains that to say "what a symbol means" is merely to interpret it in terms of *other symbols*, but denies that we are thereby "imprisoned in language" as some philosophers have supposed.)

## THINKING AND MEANING

As we have seen, the main purpose of the lecture is to abolish the act-object relation. Mr. Ayer is trying to convince us that when we talk about acts of knowing, believing, doubting, etc., we are really referring to dispositions; and that when we talk about the objects of such acts, we are really referring to the fact that symbols have meaning. But it may be objected, he says, "that the use of symbols which are meaningful is itself just such a mental occurrence as I am trying to eliminate. . . . It is necessary that the signs in question should be taken to refer to something. And must not these objects of reference be apprehended by the mind?" (p. 21). If so, the fact that symbols are meaningful cannot be used to abolish the act-object relation; for whenever a symbol is meaningfully employed, the act-object relation must already be there.

I think that this is the most formidable objection which Mr. Ayer has to meet; and he himself admits that it is not easy to answer. Obviously there is some difference "between talking intelligently and merely babbling" and likewise "between understanding what another person says and merely hearing the noises that he makes" (p. 21). But what makes the difference? Not the presence or absence of any cognitive act. For what sort of cognitive act could it be? Not an act of imaging. It is empirically false that images are always present when we use symbols with understanding (p. 21). And even if they were, it would not help; for such images "must themselves be symbols if they are to do the work required of them" (*ibid*). I do not wish to defend the Imagist theory of thinking, but I doubt whether Mr. Ayer has done full justice to it. Its advocates would say that the images here in question are *natural* symbols, whereas words are only conventional ones; and this, they would insist, makes all the difference. They would admit that images are not always present, but would say that when they are absent we are using words in an *uncashed* manner, merely as substitutes or counters, which we might—or might not—be able to cash with images on demand.

But to continue. Mr. Ayer agrees that if I am to understand a symbol, I must in some sense "know what it stands for." But this, he says, does not imply that anything is actually going on in my mind. It implies only that I have certain dispositions or capacities. Thus if I understand a sentence which I am uttering or hearing, I am capable of describing the situations which would make my sentence true (i.e. of substituting other equivalent sentences for the present one), and I am capable of recognizing such situations when and if they turn up. I am *capable* of doing these things, but I am not actually doing anything now, over and above the uttering of—or listening to—the words themselves.

Likewise, when I talk intelligently (whether in public or in private), I certainly "know what I am saying." But this knowing again, accord-

ing to Mr. Ayer, is not a cognitive process or activity independent of the saying, and occurring alongside of it. If it were, it would itself involve the intelligent use of symbols; and then we should have an infinite regress, as we have seen already (p. 22). A similar difficulty would arise if we said that when I talk intelligently, I *intend* to make the noises I do make. For such intending, if regarded as a separate act, would itself be a piece of symbol-using. No; my knowing what I am saying is not this sort of thing at all, according to Mr. Ayer. It is not any sort of cognitive process concurrent with—still less preceding—my utterances. On the contrary, it is "something for which the criteria are to be sought in my *behaviour*. It consists in the way in which I formulate the signs, or in the tone in which I express myself, or in my being able subsequently to recall what I have said, or in the way in which I make my discourse hang together" (p. 22; my italics). I think that Mr. Ayer's use of the word "behaviour" here is a little odd (Or perhaps the trouble is that Dr. Watson has spoilt the word for us.) Recalling what one has previously said is not what most people would call "behaviour." It is surely a cognitive act, if anything is. And what about "the way I make my discourse hang together"? This can be called behaviour if my discourse is a public one which I speak aloud, or write on paper or on a black-board. But my discourse might be private, conducted entirely in auditory or kinaesthetic images; and yet I may make it hang together quite well. Would this be behaviour even in the most elastic and pre-Watsonian sense of the word?

Professor Ayer now considers another objection. It might be argued that even though no special sort of cognitive *act* is needed, yet we cannot explain the intelligent use of symbols without introducing the notion of a persisting cognitive *state*: the one which the present writer has called "familiarity with universals" (p. 23). I think that this, or something like this, is what any old-fashioned philosopher would say when first confronted with a theory such as Mr. Ayer's. He might not mind so very much about "acts." But he *would* want to say that in order to use symbols with understanding, it is not enough to have dispositions of various kinds, nor yet to be actually behaving in various ways, nor both together: one must be actually *aware* of something. And this something, it would be said, is certainly not just the symbols themselves, not even if they are mental images; it is what is variously called a universal, or a concept or an abstract idea—or a set of those, as the case may be. It would further be said that Mr. Ayer's adverb "intelligently" covers two different things which he has not distinguished—namely skill on the one hand, and understanding on the other. One may use words or other symbols skilfully, but this (it would be said) is not the same as using them with understanding. The two things may go together.

They certainly do in Mr. Ayer himself; perhaps that is why it has not occurred to him to distinguish them! But they do not always go together. One may use words very clumsily, with very little dexterity, as most of us frequently do; and yet one may be using them with understanding. And if one does, it is because one "has one's eye on the object," as we say; that is, because the concepts which the words refer to are actually before one's mind. On the other hand, a man may talk or write very skilfully without "having his eye on the object" at all, though he may have had his eye on it long ago, when his skill in word-concatenation was being acquired.

These are the objections which Mr. Ayer has to meet. Let us now consider his reply to them. He is quite willing to let people talk about "familiarity with universals" if they like. Since class-symbols do have a meaning, we may if we please introduce the word "universal" as a way of referring indefinitely to what they mean (p. 23 *fin.*). For example, it is a fact that some things are yellow; so we can say, if we like, that there is a universal called yellowness. The objection to this way of speaking, in Mr. Ayer's view, is not that it is wrong, but that it is unilluminating. "We do not in any way *explain* the fact that some things are yellow by saying that they are instances of the universal 'yellow.' . . . We merely re-state it in a more mystifying way" (p. 24, my italics). Again, "it is not *because* I am familiar with the universal 'manhood' that I am able to think, or talk intelligently, about men. My familiarity with this universal just consists in the fact that I am able to use the word 'man' correctly" (*ibid.*, my italics). And this ability in turn consists partly in being able to combine the word with other words in accordance with the conventional rules for its use; and partly in being able to apply the word to the appropriate objects when and if I observe them—in other words, in "being able to recognize a man when I see one."

Now what does Mr. Ayer mean by the words "explain" and "because" which I have italicized? What is he complaining of when he says that this talk about universals such as "yellowness" does not explain the fact that some things are yellow, but merely restates it in a more mystifying way; and likewise that this talk about being familiar with universals does not explain the intelligent use of symbols? Is he asking for a *causal* explanation of these two things? But of course that is not what these philosophers are offering him. They are offering him a philosophical analysis of the proposition "some things are yellow," and of the proposition "the symbol 'yellow' is being used intelligently." Mr. Ayer complains that they have merely re-stated the facts in a more mystifying way. A cynic might comment that this is just what philosophical analysis consists in ("He told us what everybody knew in words that nobody could

## PHILOSOPHY

understand"). Of course the cynic would not be altogether right. But I am afraid we must admit that words like "clear" and "illuminating," with their contraries "obscure" and "mystifying", have something *relative* in their meaning. What is clarifying for one philosopher may perfectly well be mystifying for another. What you find mystifying depends on what you find *unmystifying* to start with. To Mr. Ayer the fact that we use symbols meaningfully is not at all mysterious, or not much. So when other people try to re-describe this fact in quite a different terminology—e.g. by talking about awareness of universals—they seem to him to be substituting a mystery for something which was initially *unmysterious*. But with old-fashioned philosophers it is the other way round. To them, the existence of conceptual cognition—the conceiving of concepts, or universals or abstract ideas—does not appear mysterious, or not very; whereas the fact that we use noises, marks, etc., to "refer to" what we do not at the moment feel or see does appear very mysterious indeed. They therefore proceed to clarify what is, to them, more mysterious in terms of what is, to them, less so. They analyse symbolic reference in terms of awareness of universals. And it will not do for Mr. Ayer to reply that at any rate his starting point is more empirical than theirs. For it is an empirical fact that conceptual cognition occurs, however you analyse it; just as it is an empirical fact that the meaningful use of symbols occurs, however you analyse it.

If there is anything in this line of thought, it should be possible to show that the two analyses (Professor Ayer's and the traditional one) are not so different as they look. They look different because their starting-points really are different; what is initially mysterious to the one party is initially *unmysterious* to the other, and *vice versa*. But if both analyses were fully worked out, should they not meet in the middle? Neither of them, perhaps, has been fully worked out as yet. Still, it should be possible, even now, to see that they "converge" towards agreement despite differences in terminology and emphasis. Can this be seen? Perhaps it might be, if we reflected a little more on the key notion of Mr. Ayer's analysis, the notion of a disposition or capacity; and especially on the capacity for *recognizing*, e.g. our ability "to recognize a man when we see one."

The trouble with Mr. Ayer's account of the meaningful use of symbols—or rather the incompleteness of it—lies in this: the dispositions in which knowledge of the meaning of a symbol is to consist are, as it were, placed side by side, without any explanation of the relations between them. My knowledge of the meaning of the word *W* consists of a number of *different* dispositions: the capacity to recognize objects of which *W* is (for me) the name; the capacity

## THINKING AND MEANING

to combine it with other words into sentences which make sense; to utter or to image other sentences equivalent to these, or entailed by them; the capacity to give a nominal definition of W, or at any rate to accept a good nominal definition offered by other people, and to reject a bad one; the capacity to produce images or pictures on paper which will "cash" that word so far as images and pictures can, and to correct them if they are inadequate; the capacity (with some words) to produce actual "real life" instances which cash the word, as I could do with the word "walk" and as a golfer could do with the phrase "mashie-shot"; the capacity to perform appropriate actions, both utterances and others, when an object of which W is for me the name is perceived and noticed by me. Not all these dispositions are indispensable, of course. I could know the meaning of the word "man" even if I had no visual imagery and could not draw pictures. But some of them, and I think a pretty large sub-group of them, must exist in me if I know the meaning of a word.

It will be seen that I have mentioned more dispositions than Mr. Ayer has; but I think he would accept my list, and very likely he would agree that it could be made still longer. Now the various acts to which these dispositions dispose us are just what old-fashioned philosophers would call "occurrent manifestations of our awareness of a universal"; and Mr. Ayer might agree to call them "occurrent manifestations of our knowledge of the meaning of a word." Where is the difference? It is this. The old-fashioned philosopher would say that one of those dispositions is fundamental and the others derivative. He would say that all the others *depend upon* the capacity to recognize instances. If we did not have this, we obviously could not produce the images, pictures, models or "real-life" instances, which cash the word in question; nor could we perform the intelligent actions which are appropriate in the presence of the object. For example, I could not intelligently open a door if I did not recognize that it was one. More important still, the capacity to combine the word W with other words into sentences, phrases, etc., which make sense, the capacity to produce other symbols equivalent to it, in short the capacity to operate with the word in the *absence* of perceived instances—all this likewise depends on the capacity to recognize instances when they are present. It is true that even though we were unable to recognize instances when present, we might still be able to combine W with other words *as if* we understood it, just as a parrot can. We might have been very well-drilled in the requisite talking habits (or writing habits!) and our neighbours might not be able at once to detect our deficiency. But for all that we should not then be talking with understanding, and the word W would not be for us a symbol, but only a noise combinable with other noises which are.

## PHILOSOPHY

Now Mr. Ayer has not himself said that the disposition to recognize instances is fundamental, and the other dispositions derivative. But I do not see why he should not. And if he did, he would have gone quite a long way to meet the "believers in universals"; so long as the universals they believe in are merely the mild and harmless *universalia in rebus* and not the transcendent universals of the Platonists.

He would have gone still further if he could be persuaded to modify his excessively Behaviouristic account of recognition itself ("The criteria for my recognizing an object lie wholly in my behaviour," p. 25). It is true that if I wish to discover whether *someone else* recognizes a door when he sees one, I shall have to examine his behaviour, including his utterances. But is this what I do when I wish to discover whether I myself am recognizing something? Do I observe the physical actions I am doing and the words I am uttering, and conclude "Oh, well, then it seems that I must be recognizing this object"? Surely not. And if I did, there would be a vicious infinite regress. For if it were a case of applying "criteria," must I not *recognize* that my own behaviour and utterances are of the sort which the criteria prescribe? Sooner or later we must come back to an act, or occurrence, which is not merely behaviour, but is irreducibly cognitive: an act of *noticing* or *becoming aware*—I dare not say "knowing"—that something is of a familiar sort, however the phrase "of a sort" is to be analysed. Then why not admit straight off that I just *notice* what sort of thing the particular object is, and that this is precisely what recognizing amounts to? It may be that the noticing never exists without expressing itself in some kind of behaviour or some kind of symbol-production, public or private. But it does exist nevertheless, and is something irreducibly cognitive. Moreover, it is something which *occurs* and has a data; it is not a disposition, but is the occurrent manifestation of one. Would Mr. Ayer feel happier if I called it an act of *verifying*, instead of recognizing? I will if he likes. To recognize something as being  $\phi$  is nothing more nor less than verifying  $\exists x\phi x$ . Would he want to maintain that even verifying is to be analysed in a purely Behaviouristic way? I cannot believe that he would. Surely verifying is an irreducibly cognitive act if anything is?

But I should like to ask one further concession of him, which he may be more reluctant to make. He has assumed, I think, that at any given moment a disposition is either fully actualized, or else not actualized at all (i.e. entirely latent). It appears to me, on the contrary, that there are degrees of actualization. As some people have put it, a disposition may be *sub-activated*. It may manifest itself by influencing the course of our utterances or imagings or actions, although the conditions for its complete actualization are

## THINKING AND MEANING

not at the moment fulfilled. My capacity to recognize a man if I see one is not *fully* actualized until I do see one. Nevertheless, it does seem to exercise some control over the way I use the word "man" in absence. It exercises a kind of guidance—both positive and inhibitory—upon the way I combine this word with other words, upon my choice of equivalent words if demanded, and upon my acceptance or rejection of equivalents offered by others; when and so far as it does so, I am said—metaphorically—to be talking "with my eye on the object," or to know what I am talking about, but otherwise not. And finally it exercises a control or guidance upon my production of images or pictures on paper which partially "cash" the word. This, or something like this, is what is meant by saying that the capacity to recognize instances is sub-activated—though not completely actualized—when one uses a word in absence but with understanding. (It is the point which Hume made in his own way when he explained how the members of a class may be "present to the mind in power" even though not present in fact, and how we may avoid talking nonsense in the uncashed use of words which stand for very complex ideas.\*) I should like to hope that Mr. Ayer could be induced to accept this point also. If he did, he would *almost* have met the "believers in universals" half-way.

\* *Treatise*, Book I, part i, section 7, of "Abstract Ideas" (Selby-Bigge pp. 20, 23. Everyman, pp. 28, 31.)



# ON THE FOUNDATIONS AND APPLICATION OF FINITE CLASSICAL ARITHMETIC

G. J. WHITROW, M.A., D.Phil.

" 'TELL me, Protagoras,' he said, 'does a single grain of millet or the ten-thousandth part of a grain make any sound when it falls?' And when Protagoras said it did not, 'Then,' asked Zeno, 'does a bushel of millet make any sound when it falls or not?' Protagoras answered that it did, whereupon Zeno replied, 'But surely there is some ratio between a bushel of millet and a single grain or even the ten-thousandth part of a grain'; and when this was admitted, 'But then surely,' Zeno said, 'the ratios of the corresponding sounds to each other will be the same: for as the bodies which make the sounds are to one another, so will the sounds be to one another. And if this is so, and if the bushel of millet makes a sound, then the single grain of millet and the ten-thousandth part of a grain will make a sound.' This was the way Zeno used to put his questions"<sup>1</sup>

Despite the vast literature which has been devoted to the study and elucidation of Zeno's paradoxes, that of the millet seed appears to have been unduly neglected. Aristotle<sup>2</sup> dismissed the matter with the brief comment, "Therefore Zeno's argument is not true, for there is no part of a grain of millet that does not make a sound: for there is no reason why any such part should not in any length of time fail to move the air that the whole bushel moves in falling." More recently, the author of the article "Zeno of Elea," in the thirteenth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, remarked, "It is indeed difficult to understand how so acute a thinker . . . should neglect the imperfection of the organs of sense."

It is notorious that the paradoxes of Zeno have stubbornly defied all attempts at resolution. Both the tantalizing subtlety of the arguments and the profound importance of the problems raised have endowed these paradoxes with a phoenix-like character. The most famous, of course, are those concerning motion, in particular "Achilles and the Tortoise." They introduce the difficult concept of the infinite process. The "Millet Seed," however, does not involve this concept: For this reason most critics appear to be unaware of its subtlety and significance.

It seems to me that the core of this typical "threshold" paradox concerns the associated problems of "creation" and of "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts." Consequently, I believe that Zeno intended that his argument should be interpreted as follows.

<sup>1</sup> Simplicius, 1108. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle, *Physics*, H5.250 a19.

## APPLICATION OF FINITE CLASSICAL ARITHMETIC

Logically, a non-zero magnitude cannot be generated by combining a finite number of zero magnitudes, "*ex nihilo nihil fit*." Experientially, however, it appears that an audible sound can be produced by the combined effect of a finite number of inaudible sounds; in other words, "something" is produced by a *finite* set of "nothings." Thus there would appear to be a complete contradiction between reason and experience.

If I am right in this interpretation, the criticisms advanced by Aristotle and by the author of the article in the *Encyclopaedia* are beside the point. Their refutations are successful only against the shallower aspects of the paradox, for it can be regarded as existing at various "levels." Thus, Aristotle considered only the "dynamical level." Similarly, the author of the article in the *Encyclopaedia* considered only the "acoustic level." At these levels the paradox is trivial and of no interest. It becomes much more interesting and difficult at the "arithmetical level" considered by Zeno.

At this level, as I have already remarked, the problem concerns the creation of "something" out of a finite set of "nothings." The "sum" of a finite number of inaudible sounds is an audible sound, so that in this case the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The paradox at this level is thus clearly associated with the concept of "addition."

In a recent article<sup>1</sup> on "Mathematics and Tautology," I have re-examined the celebrated proposition discussed by Kant, that  $7 + 5 = 12$ . J. S. Mill believed that this statement is an empirical law of Nature. On the other hand, the logical positivists maintain that it is analytic; so that the contrary proposition, that seven plus five is not equal to twelve, would be self-contradictory. As I have shown, in our present state of dubiety concerning the foundations of arithmetic<sup>2</sup> this point of view is indisputable only if "twelve" is regarded merely as another name for "seven plus five"; but from this point of view mathematics is no more than a potentially endless catalogue of synonyms. Once we pass beyond this stage and attribute meanings to the various symbols, the character of the proposition becomes less obviously tautological.

What do we mean by "addition"? *What is the scope of the laws of finite arithmetic?* Until the nineteenth century it was assumed that there is only one logically possible system of geometry and one logically possible system of arithmetic and algebra. We now believe that both these assumptions were false. The existence of non-Euclidean geometries has long been well known. The existence of different types of arithmetic and algebra has become familiar only recently with the advent of quantum mechanics. In classical arith-

<sup>1</sup> Whitrow, *Polemic* (to appear).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Weyl, *Am. Math. Monthly*, January 1946.

## PHILOSOPHY

metic and algebra, we know that the sum of a finite number of objects is independent of the order of counting; and, in general, the act of counting is non-cyclic, so that for example an equation of the type,

$$a + a + a + \dots + a = a,$$

where there is some definite number (greater than one) of  $a$ 's on the right-hand side, is possible only if  $a$  is zero. Moreover, if  $a$  is zero, the equation *must* be satisfied.

Now, consider the bushel of falling millet seeds. Let the sound which is heard when one falls be denoted by  $a$ , the sound when two fall by  $a + a$ , and so on. Then we have

$$\begin{aligned} a + a &= a, \\ a + a + a &= a, \\ &\dots \end{aligned}$$

and so on, until finally we have for some definite number of additions,

$$a + a + a + \dots + a > a.$$

The propositions,  $a + a = a$ , etc., would appear to imply that  $a$  is zero. The proposition

$$a + a + a + \dots + a > a,$$

would appear to be possible only if  $a$  is not zero. Hence, we get a contradiction or paradox, which can be resolved only by assuming that, in the present context, the symbols " $a$ " and "+" do not obey the laws of classical arithmetic.

The lesson of Zeno's "Millet Seed" is now evident: *the laws of classical finite arithmetic are not appropriate to all objects of thought*; for in considering the auditory effect of dropping millet seeds, for example, it is clear that they do not apply. The total effect is greater than the classical arithmetic sum of the separate effects due to the dropping of each seed. We thus see that, so far from being one of the most trivial of Zeno's paradoxes, the "Millet Seed" is in fact one of the most fruitful; for it directs our attention to the fundamental problems of the meaning of the concept of addition, of the construction of various types of addition, and of discovering which types apply to which sets of objects. For example, granted, for the sake of argument, that  $7 + 5 = 12$ , irrespective of whether this proposition is analytic or synthetic, *a priori* or *a posteriori*, to what class of "objects" does it apply?

Consideration of Zeno's paradox suggests that the process of counting is intimately associated with the concept of time. If the bushel of millet seed is allowed to drop so that each seed falls at a different instant, and if these instants are not too close together, then no sound will be heard. Hence, in this case there will be no paradox and

## APPLICATION OF FINITE CLASSICAL ARITHMETIC

no apparent violation of the laws of classical arithmetic. Hamilton,<sup>1</sup> Helmholtz,<sup>2</sup> and Brouwer<sup>3</sup> have all stressed the intimate relation between our construction of the system of integers and our intuition of time. As far as I know, none of them appear to have considered the relation between the time-factor and the *application* of arithmetic to objects. The "Millet Seed" suggests that the classical process of counting applies only to objects considered *sub specie aeternitatis*. Time does not enter into the *application* of classical arithmetic any more than into that of geometry. At first sight this statement may seem paradoxical. The addition process appears to take place in time. Nevertheless, ordinary counting has the characteristic property of a purely spatial concept; for, unlike the flow of time, it is reversible, so that the sum of a set of objects is independent of the *order* of counting. Moreover, it is the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow. Pegasus, Bucephalus and Incitatus<sup>4</sup> are three, although the first is mythical and the other two never co-existed. In general, classical arithmetic appears to apply to objects considered *sub specie aeternitatis*. However, even in this case there may be exceptions. For example, Whitehead<sup>5</sup> has drawn attention to a significant legend of the Council of Nicea. "When the bishops took their places upon the thrones they were 318; when they rose up to be called over, it appeared that they were 319; so that they never could make the number come right, and whenever they approached the last of the series he immediately turned into the likeness of his next neighbour." To bishops of this type it is clear that the classical process of counting does not apply; and as Whitehead has pointed out, "Whatever may be the historical worth of this story, it may safely be said that it cannot be disproved by deductive reasoning from the premisses of abstract logic," for "it is perfectly possible to imagine a universe in which any act of counting by a being in it annihilated some members of the class counted during the time and only during the time of its continuance."

The problem of applying classical arithmetic becomes more difficult when we turn from the summation of objects, regarded *sub specie aeternitatis*, to the summation of processes. In one sense, we can regard processes as similar to the three horses, but this is not the sense in which we usually want to regard them. Instead, we often require the sum of a set of processes to be equivalent to the resultant process. Thus, for example, the sum of the inaudible sounds produced by the falling seeds separately should be equivalent to the

<sup>1</sup> Hamilton, *Dublin Transactions*, XVII, II (1835).

<sup>2</sup> Helmholtz, "Von Zahlen und Messen" (Leipzig, 1887).

<sup>3</sup> Brouwer, *Bull. Am. Math. Soc.*, XX (1913).

<sup>4</sup> Suetonius, "Lives of the Caesars," IV, 55.

<sup>5</sup> Whitehead, "Mathematics," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 13th Edition.

## PHILOSOPHY

sound produced by the bushel. Now, if the seeds fall separately at widely spaced epochs the resultant sound will be inaudible; on the other hand, it will be audible if the seeds fall simultaneously. Hence, in this case the sum of the individual processes of sound-production depends on the time-factor; and, because of this dependence, the addition of processes can, and in this case does, differ from the type of addition on which classical arithmetic is based.

Numbers can be considered either as static concepts or as processes.<sup>1</sup> In applying mathematics to physical phenomena, it is often necessary to consider numbers from the latter point of view. In this case, the ideas of addition and multiplication depend on the time-factor. Thus, if a number of processes occur simultaneously, it is often convenient to regard the resultant process as their "sum." If a number of processes occur consecutively, the resultant process is often regarded as their "product." The arithmetic and algebra of processes is not unique, and in particular can differ from arithmetic and algebra. For example, multiplication can be non-commutative, so that  $b \times a$  is not the same as  $a \times b$ . Indeed, this feature characterized the first non-classical algebra, that of quaternions, invented by Hamilton in 1843. He discovered that, in the algebra of rotations about three mutually perpendicular axes in space, multiplication is non-commutative. Similarly, non-commutative addition can be illustrated by vector displacements in non-Euclidean space. In the case of those simultaneous processes the resultant of which is interpreted as their sum, addition is commutative; but, as the "Millet Seed" indicates, the classical rule,

$$0 + 0 + 0 + \dots + 0 = 0,$$

is not always valid.

The situation arising when the simultaneous addition of a *finite* number,  $n > n_0$ , of zero magnitudes gives rise to a non-zero magnitude is a typical "threshold" phenomenon. Throughout the history both of natural science and of philosophy, men have continually sought to explain away the apparent creation of "something" out of "nothing." "There is nothing new under the sun" is the theme of most philosophers. Similarly, men of science are for ever seeking principles of permanence beneath the apparent flux of phenomena. Thus, they have evolved one conservation theorem after another. Nevertheless, knowledge as it grows continually overflows the moulds in which men seek to confine and shape it. The law of the conservation of energy, for example, in its classical dynamical form is valid only in conservative fields of force; in a more general form it was found necessary to include thermodynamic phenomena; and with the advent of Einstein's theory of relativity it was found neces-

<sup>1</sup> Whitrow, *op. cit.*

sary to include inertial mass. To-day the law can be retained in *all* known atomic processes only if the existence of the neutrino is postulated; so far, this appears to be a purely *ad hoc* concept with no observable properties. Similarly, in chemistry the indestructible atom of Dalton has had to be replaced by the radio-active atom of Rutherford; and in biology the changeless species of Linnaeus has been discarded for the changing species of Darwin and Mendel.

To the hyper-rational mind, "creation" appears to be inexplicable. Thus Zeno presumably resolved the paradox of the millet seed by denying the reality of the world of the senses. On the other hand, the followers of Bergson can resolve the paradox by rejecting the whole process of analysis, regarding each phenomenon as indivisible. Indeed, for them the paradox need never arise. But for men of science, who follow neither Zeno nor Bergson, the paradox is not resolved. Instead, we are made to realize the limitations of finite classical arithmetic.

## PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

### PHILOSOPHY IN ITALY

WITH the new development of physical science the problem of the revision of traditional epistemology becomes ever more acute. In an essay composed with great perspicacity Professor Luigi Scaravelli<sup>1</sup> poses the question whether the *Critique of Pure Reason*, based as it is on Newtonian physics and on the three-dimensional conception of space, is consistent with the views of the physics of relativity and quanta. Relativity, as Cassirer had already shown, offers much smaller difficulties to an attempt at reconciliation than does the quantum theory, which runs counter to the idea of the continuity of space-time schemes.

Scaravelli sees a possibility of reconciling the latter with the *Critique of Pure Reason*, showing that in both the idea of reality does not depend on the intuition of space-time, but inheres directly in sensation, as a "degree of intensity" incapable of being reduced to extension. And this degree is compatible with the discontinuous nature of the quanta. The thesis is disputable, but it is developed with a penetrating discussion of the Kantian texts. From the comparison of these there emerges much interesting information on the nature of the sensible consciousness according to Kant, which enriches the excessively schematic notion of sensation as a mere "datum," beyond the possibility of investigation, which is the point where Kant's commentators, generally call a halt.

Francesco Albergamo traces the history of the logic of mathematics from the Greeks to our own days,<sup>2</sup> in an effort to corroborate Croce's thesis on the practical rather than theoretical character of these studies. The ancient and medieval part of this history is treated very briefly; but the author expatiates widely on the modern part from Kant to Poincaré and Croce. Whoever accepts the purely conventional character of mathematics and of the conception of nature derived therefrom may find in Albergamo's book a copious review of all the arguments that have been used in support of this thesis in the course of history. However, the reading of it gives the impression that the thesis itself is too hasty and that it skates rapidly over too many problems which have had and still have a profound speculative interest and which reveal the inability of pragmatism to give an adequate representation of the mathematical procedure.

From an analogous point of view, but with more direct scientific experience, a chemist, Michele Giusa,<sup>3</sup> has written a history of science. In an introductory section the relationship between the history of science and epistemology is studied; the historical investigation that follows stresses chiefly three names—Galileo, Boyle, and Planck, representing for the author three decisive turnings in the evolution of scientific thought.

The relationship between the individual and the mass—and hence between the two forms of life and civilization based on these two terms—is one of the crucial problems of our age. Bandini, who had attacked it a few years ago in a volume of polemic intent directed against the degeneration of our present-day

<sup>1</sup> L. Scaravelli, *Saggio sulla categoria kantiana della realtà*, Florence, Le Monnier, 1947, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> F. Albergamo, *Storia della logica delle scienze esatte*, Bari, Laterza, 1947, p. 359.

<sup>3</sup> M. Giusa, *Storia delle scienze ed epistemologia*, Turin, Chi antore, 1945, p. 297.

## PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY: PHILOSOPHY IN ITALY

mechanical civilization, returns to it now with a volume of more constructive intention.<sup>1</sup> He favours the individualistic and liberal conception, but not dissociated from social exigencies, which ought to occupy a subordinate position if man is not to be degraded to an animal existence.

In this book, too, some polemical points are developed very effectively. For example, Bandini gives the name of "privatism" to a tendency of the modern man which, while it is antithetic to prevailing socialism, is at the same time a consequence of it. "Privatism," he says, "is a necessary product of the forms of life that are peculiar to that type of economic civilization which is one of our terms. It is closely linked with what could be referred to as the "giantism" of our civilization. In the over-large modern city, in the too distant and too complex civic administration, in the centralizing and universally providing state, the individual finds himself excluded from those forms of public activity to which he is nevertheless called by spontaneous tendencies and innate interests of the human mind." And he therefore confines himself to his own concerns, in the narrow circle of his private interests, and becomes indifferent to public affairs.

To complete the work on Romanticism published in 1943 my volume on Hegel now sees the light. It contains a detailed critical exposition of the whole Hegelian system, and an historical review of the literature concerning Hegel.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> L. Bandini, *Uomo e Valore*, Turin, Einaudi, 1942; *Dalla Massa all' individuo*, Florence, Le Monnier, 1947.

<sup>2</sup> G. de Ruggiero, *Hegel*, Bari, Laterza, 1948, p. 309.

GUIDO DE RUGGIERO.

(Translated from the Italian by Beatrice Allen.)



## NEW BOOKS

*The Philosophy of David Hume.* By NORMAN KEMP SMITH. (London: Macmillan & Co. 1941. Pp. xxiv, 568. Price 25s.)

The lateness of this notice of so important a work is unfortunate. The task of reviewing it was committed at the time of publication to someone who has been prevented by very onerous duties from carrying it out. Having taken over the task at short notice, I have not had the opportunity of doing justice to the book in its rich detail. I shall therefore at the outset do it justice in general terms by declaring it to be, so far as I am competent to judge, the most careful and illuminating exposition of Hume's philosophy that has so far appeared, in any language. Perhaps a Scot was required to understand a Scot, though the Scotsmen before Professor Kemp Smith have all failed. If the contentions of the book are accepted—and in my view they should be, on the whole—our text-books will have to be revised; in any case, every future expositor will be very negligent if he does not reckon with this radical re-orientation and re-examination of Hume's philosophical writings. Hume's *Treatise* is a really difficult work, abounding in both subtleties and inconsistencies, and tantalizing because the general merit of it requires us to make something of these. What we have been wanting is a point of view from which Hume's precocious masterpiece becomes, whether acceptable or no, humanly intelligible; and such a point of view has now been given to us. The masterpiece has not hitherto been dealt with well. It has been praised too much with a praise that is facile because resting on little but agreement with its method and apparent conclusions; and it has been belaboured too much with a criticism that is tiresome because inspired by antipathy. Professor Kemp Smith has contented himself with the basic task of trying to see what Hume really meant. When he allows himself a judgment, it is a piece of immanent criticism only.

The outstanding, because unusual, virtue of his patient study is that it seeks to interpret Hume's mind by taking the *Treatise* as a whole, and by considering the two *Enquiries* along with it. Even the tedious Book II of the earliest work, and the weak *Dissertation on the Passions*, are kept in view. By nothing less than all these must the interpretation be tested. Hitherto Hume has been read most often in Book I only of the *Treatise*, and in consequence he has been represented as starting from Locke's *Essay*, and as doing little more than trying, with some help from Berkeley, to make Locke's conclusions more consistent with his presuppositions and methods. The resultant convention has been to depict him as first and foremost an epistemologist, who revelled, and loved to revel, in the negations of an almost complete scepticism. That is certainly a very one-sided and distorting picture. The distinctive general contention of this new study of Hume is that that approach is false in history and falsifying in exposition. Hume, we are now told, began his intellectual struggles—for such they were, not pastimes—on the problems of ethics, so that Books II and III are to be regarded as earlier in conception, and to some extent in execution, than Book I. Further, he pursued his ethical thinking originally and chiefly under the influence of Hutcheson. In the process he became interested in the epistemological problems handled in Locke's seminal *Essay*, and detected the possibility of applying in this field the same Hutchesonian principle that had inspired his ethics. This principle is that "reason" is the servant of feeling. As widened by Hume, it means that not

only our beliefs in values but also our most general beliefs in matters of fact are not determined cognitively. The general gist of Book I of the *Treatise*, then, is not that belief in external material things, and belief in their being causally connected, are unevidenced and are therefore to be philosophically rejected, but that, insusceptible though they are of either logical or empirical proof, they are inexpugnable functions of our nature and indispensable for all our living. Hume's indictment is not of those beliefs, but of the sort of philosophical thinking that claims to rationalize them. That is the general point of view offered to us by Professor Kemp Smith.

That Hume regarded himself primarily as a moral philosopher, indeed as a practical moralist as well, is an impression that grows if we forget the traditional character, move through the full circuit of his writings, and live with him in his letters. It is well-known that he counted his *Principles of Morals* as his best work—"incomparably the best" is his own expression—but the significance of this judgment has rarely been explored. Whether his view of religion be right or wrong, his frequent attacks upon it, in reasoned argument or in disparaging asides, are clearly motivated by the desire to defend the autonomy of morality: he will not have simple human decencies suspended in the name of anything alleged to be better than our natural sympathies as educated by experience and reflection. There is at least as much of the moralist as of the theorist in his political inquiries, and as much of the moralist as of the artist in his *Essays* and his *History*. In his own restrained, unapostolic way—fashionably shunning "enthusiasm"—he had a genuine concern about the social tendencies of his time, and wrote not simply to clarify ideas for clarification's sake, with the integrity of the thinker, but in addition to vindicate and commend, with the integrity of the moralist, a broad humanitarian outlook and practice. At any rate, that is the cumulative impression which I get from reading Hume as a whole. Professor Kemp Smith has much the same impression. But it has led him, as it had not led me (lacking his acumen), into a re-examination of Hume's epistemology. What launched him on this extraordinarily instructive line of research was his recognition of the primacy of the influence of Hutcheson. The fruitfulness of this *ben trovato* is displayed convincingly.

The evidence of the strength and extent of Hutcheson's influence is, of course, circumstantial, and therefore cannot be effectively summarized here; it must be collected piece by piece from a hundred scattered places in the book, and then be brought together. The interest of it goes beyond the bare establishment of an historical link to the giving of a clue to the exposition of Hume in general and in detail. Professor Kemp Smith rightly allows that his broad thesis stand or falls according as it does or does not remove, or otherwise illuminate, some of the problems of exegesis which have often been slurred over, or even adduced as proofs that Hume was too superficial to be taken seriously. No man handling a large realm of discourse at the philosophical level can achieve perfect consistency, but there are apparent inconsistencies in Hume that call for an explanation less obvious than that of human infallibility, and more adequate than that of incompetence, since Hume proves his competence, within the limits of his times, on page after page of all his writings. Why, for example, does he think biologically, in terms of an original complexity of instinct in us, in Book III of the *Treatise* (his ethics), and yet in Book I think like a mechanist, in terms of the external association of simple perceptions? Why does he pulverize the idea of an abiding self in Book I, and frankly assume and appeal to it in Book II? What is his purpose in exposing the flaws in the current arguments for a really external world, and for real causal connections within it, while yet claiming the right to

## PHILOSOPHY

affirm that world and its network of causes and effects as realities? What are we to make of his apparent explaining away of the idea of necessary connection among matters of fact in terms of a process of association that is explicitly said to involve causal determination? Professor Kemp Smith candidly supposes that these, and other difficulties to which he draws attention, demand explanation, and explanation that is fair both to Hume's intentions and to his philosophical acuteness; and he finds the explanation by detecting the influence of Hutcheson alongside, and in certain respects persisting beyond, that of Locke and Newton. From Locke, Hume took over the principle that all ideas can be traced back to simple impressions; from Newton he caught up the notion of gravitation or attraction, and generalized it, under the form of association, into a principle of comprehensive philosophical applicability; but before he took these two principles in his hand he had already thought out his ethics under the inspiration of Hutcheson, following the latter's view that moral (and aesthetic) beliefs are not affairs of rational insight, but spring from our inherited emotional constitution—and are none the worse for that. Given these three lines of influence instead of one or two, we are better equipped to understand the divagations, and the disparities of assumption and method, that face us in Hume's works; and given the primacy of Hutcheson's influence, we have a special clue to the reasons for some of Hume's second thoughts in the appendix to the *Treatise* and in the two *Enquiries*—it helps us, for instance, to see why his ethics emerged in the revision virtually unchanged.

I have dwelt on these most general contentions of the book because they have at least a liberating value. They free us from reading Hume through the old spectacles, and it is time anyhow that these were changed. On the detail of the book I cannot, because of haste, be expansive, though it is so full that even without haste the consideration of it would not be adequate within the limits of a review. Virtually every topic of Hume's epistemology and ethics is closely and luminously scrutinized. His dissection of the passions, his analysis and classification and grounding of the virtues, his unsatisfying views of space and time, the relation of the *Treatise* to the *Enquiries*, are all examined with unusually helpful results. There is an excellent vindication of the charge against Hume that he was a panderer in his revisions, accommodating his views to the prejudices of the reading public, as though his confession of "love of literary fame, my ruling passion," had to be understood with the help of nothing but a dictionary, and there is a perfect answer to the occasionally expressed opinion that on reaching his full powers Hume "deserted philosophy" for politics and history. Long notes printed as appendices to their relevant chapters are full of instruction on particular points; the shorter footnotes, when they are more than references, are littered with valuable information and comments.

For the rest, it will probably be useful to give Professor Kemp Smith's interpretation of the supposedly familiar Book I of the *Treatise*. Every reader will, I imagine, rise from his chapters with the suspicion that that Book has not been familiar to us at all. A new light is made to play upon it. Its inconsistencies are uncovered amply enough, in particular those faults of exposition with which Hume gives us every excuse for misunderstanding him; but these are explained in terms of the main tendencies of his thought, the incompatible influences to which he was responding. The following bare summary of the resultant cleansed account of his epistemological doctrine is all that I can give. It will convey no idea of the wealth of detailed analysis and sympathetic insight with which that account is constructed and evidenced.

Book I of the *Treatise* deals with belief, this term being used by Hume in the special sense of assurance of matters of fact as distinguished from know-

ledge in the Lockian sense of apprehension of the necessary connections of ideas. There are two general beliefs, one in a continuing independent material realm, the other in causal connections within this realm. Hume's investigation is not really with the question whether these are valid or no. We are natively realistic, and cannot by any amount of philosophizing reason ourselves out of that attitude. Philosophy can correct that native realism at one point only, namely, by proving that the immediate objects of awareness are not extra-mental but subjective entities, "ideas" in Locke's sense. The proof, however, itself proceeds on our native realistic assumption, which alone set the current philosophical problem and alone gave meaning to it, the problem of how from momentary subjective objects we can validly infer an abiding external order. Hume's answer is, on his "sceptical" side, that we cannot; on his positive side, that we have no need to do so, since the two beliefs will hold their ground against all logic, being inevitable in operation and necessary for both thought and practice. The first thing philosophy can do is to make this position clear. Hume is here applying in a new sphere the Hutchesonian principle which he has applied in his ethics, namely, that our basic beliefs (which on a few occasions he unfortunately calls "reason") are determined for us—determined, he says, by "feeling," meaning antecedently to and independently of all rational insight. This is Hume's naturalism. Whether the beliefs are "valid" or no may be a question of terminology. We cannot get rid of them either in philosophy or in practice; and having a belief *means* holding its content as true.

The second thing philosophy can do is to analyse out the natural factors in those beliefs. Hume's work on belief in causality being the more distinctive, we may confine ourselves to that, though it should be remembered that the other belief is presupposed, causality being understood by him to be a relation between realities, not between ideas (except when these are being regarded as mental realities). His problem here, set by his acceptance of Locke's principle that all ideas are reducible to impressions, is to find the origin of the idea of causality, to trace out its natural history. It is not the idea of uniform but of necessary connection. No amount of sensory observation can discover any such connection, there being no more to be seen, on the side of the object, in many instances of a causal connection than in one. But in many instances the uniformity of the connection sets up an association in the mind, such that given one of its terms in impression the other term, in idea, springs up. In the resultant sense of inner compulsion, of determined transition, in this process, Hume finds the source of the idea of causality—in an impression of reflection, after having failed to find it in an impression of sensation. It may be objected that this makes causal inference not inference at all, not a passage of cognitive insight but simply a caused mental process; but that is precisely the conclusion which Hume was claiming to establish. It may be objected also that he is assuming a causal determination in the process on which he is resting the very idea of causality, but that is in order because the validity of the idea is not in question but only its origin, and also because the "natural belief" in causality operates as inevitably in our thinking about mental as of any other sort of process. His doctrine is, then, that uniformity generates a habit, and that habit generates a sense of forced transition of thought, the former being a pre-condition of the idea of causality, and the latter being its impressional source and therefore its meaning, *constituting* it. The argument is not, as is commonly supposed, one in which Hume is denying causal agency, for that, he holds, it is impossible to do (except in mere words). What he is denying is causal *inference*. In what is so called, the mind is not intuiting anything, but is simply working according to its own original causal nature. The idea of

## PHILOSOPHY

causality has not a logical ground; it has a cause; and Hume has given what he regards as the manifest cause, refraining on principle from seeking or inventing an occult one.

The analysis is not yet complete. Habit or association would account for nothing more than expectation: having experienced A and B frequently together, the re-occurrence of A would lead us to expect B. But the fact to be causally accounted for is *belief* in B. To explain this, Hume brings in his view of belief as a peculiar kind of liveliness that can be attached to ideal contents but belongs originally to impressions. Following the secondary mechanistic (Newtonian) line of his thinking, he declares that the liveliness original to impressions is naturally communicated, like motion from one body to another on impact, to any idea firmly associated with it. His deeper view, however, Hutchesonian in spirit, is that belief is an *attitude*, and an outward-facing one, spontaneously projective or realistic, and under this view he came later to transfer his emphasis from the mechanistic notion of communication of liveliness to the ultimate naturalness of *belief* in causality as a complex attitude which we are born to have and use. He holds to a similar original complexity in the realistic belief that accompanies all sensation, for sensation taken strictly is only, for him as for Locke, an immediate *awareness* of subjective impressions.

In this sustained insistence—in his mechanistic as in his biological moods—that all our assurance about matters of fact is not evidenced apprehension but natively prompted belief, Hume was drawing tightly the limits of reason. Yet he regarded himself as a sceptic in only a very modified sense. For him dogmatists and sceptics alike assume that belief without reasons is to be rejected. He distinguishes himself from both by denying that assumption. Reason has its critical function in the logical purging of particular beliefs, but it is within the sphere of natural belief that it rightly operates. It cannot either reject the natural beliefs in their generality, or go altogether beyond them without losing the contact with reality which they alone can and do give. By believing in reason as sovereign in demonstrative thinking about the relations of ideas, and as a necessary auxiliary in thinking about matters of fact, Hume was not a sceptic—despite his unguarded statement (one of many) that custom is king.

Such, as clear as I can make it, is Professor Kemp Smith's interpretation of Hume's epistemology. If it is not clear, and suggests no novelty, the fault is mine. I only wish that I could have given a more adequate indication of the probing skill and the human and philosophical insight expressed in this remarkable fundamental study of Hume.

T. E. JESSOP

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*Critical Thinking. An Introduction to Logic and Scientific Method.* By MAX BLACK, Professor of Philosophy, Cornell University. (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1946. Pp. xv + 402. Price, \$5.)

"Logic," says Professor Max Black in his Preface, "ought to be easy, interesting, and enjoyable." He has given us in this book an introduction to Logic which is all these things, without any sacrifice of rigour or seriousness. It is a real beginner's book, and no trouble is spared to familiarize the reader with the elementary concepts and processes of logic. It is also a book which the teacher of logic can enjoy on account of the skill displayed in the presentation of the material and in the devices used to elucidate or illustrate particular points. Each chapter is followed by a summary, a comprehension test of the modern intelligence test type, and exercises, many of them quite intriguing. It

seems to me altogether admirable; and one can only regret that the dollar situation must for the time being restrict its use in this country.

There are three parts, dealing with Deductive Logic, Language, and Induction and Scientific Method. In Part I Professor Black, rightly in my view, puts in the forefront conditional arguments, and arguments involving alternatives, exercising the student in them very thoroughly, before going on to a consideration of subject-predicate propositions and to categorical syllogisms. The whole of this is in a thoroughly modern spirit, but without any great departure from tradition. There is one surprising omission. Singular propositions do not come under the head of subject-predicate propositions as defined by Professor Black, and in consequence they are not treated anywhere in the book, either in the chapter on propositions or in that on syllogisms.

In the treatment of the syllogism, which is commendably brief, while the general rules of the syllogism are given, and used to show how to determine the validity of particular syllogisms, the whole discussion is closely linked with the use of Venn's diagrams, and there is no time wasted on a discussion of figures and moods, or of reduction of the other figures to the first figure. A general treatment of the theory of the syllogism, to determine all the possible valid moods in the various figures, is relegated to the appendix. The method of exposition in this appendix is not new, but is very neatly expressed, and occupies very little space. I do not know of any treatment elsewhere in print which is quite so neat. But the whole business belongs to the past rather than to the present.

In the system of classification adopted by many libraries Logic has the classmark BC. This is appropriate, in a subject where tradition counts for so much, and modern improvements are so discounted. If students of Arithmetic were still taught to add, multiply, and divide, using Roman numerals, carefully avoiding the technical improvements made possible by Arabic numerals, we should have in Arithmetic something similar to what we have in the traditional logic as still taught, and mathematics would suffer as much as logic has done, through want of a sufficiently large body of students trained in advanced processes.

If I were producing an elementary book on logic I should cut out the theory of the syllogism entirely, and deal with subject-predicate propositions on modern lines. This reform seems to me vastly overdue. Professor Black has not done this, but he has at least cut out a great deal of the purely a.c. stuff. And there is nothing in this part of his book, dealing with Deductive Logic, which would unfit a student to go ahead with the modern developments, as his next stage in the subject. That is something.

It should be noted that in this part Professor Black has concentrated on getting students technically efficient in handling deductive processes. He has not raised any of the wider issues, which might be called philosophical, such as the question of the nature of propositions, the relation of propositions to sentences, whether deduction can give new truth, and so on.

Part II, dealing with Language, has a similar practical purpose, to make students consciously aware of the variety of ways in which language is used and the nefarious purposes to which it can be put. As Professor Black says, he is not attempting "any systematic account of the nature of language and its relation to the objects of thought," but merely undertaking "the relatively modest task of developing just so much theory of language . . . as will be useful in criticizing the types of reasoning we are likely to encounter. This part of the book may therefore be regarded as a practical handbook to the linguistic problems which arise in the criticism of reasoning." The italics are

## PHILOSOPHY

Professor Black's; and I have quoted this passage because it expresses so well the general practical attitude which characterizes the book as a whole.

After a general chapter on the Uses of Language, this section has chapters on Ambiguity, on Definition, and on Assorted Fallacies. As throughout the book, there are admirable illustrations in the text taken from current books and periodicals, and a large variety of exercises.

Part III, entitled "Induction and Scientific Method," is interesting because of the way in which the subject is dealt with on various levels of accuracy and generality, starting with commonsense generalizations, and proceeding gradually to the more complicated procedures followed by the sciences. The chapter on Scientific Method contains half a dozen fairly long specimens of modern scientific investigation, with a discussion of the principles involved in them, the whole being rounded off by two chapters, one on Scientific Data and one on Scientific Theory. The treatment is fresh and stimulating, with none of the usual text-book taint, and always directed to getting students to understand what scientists are doing, and why they must do it if their generalizations are to be sound.

There are a number of small misprints—difficult to avoid in a book of this kind—but they can easily be corrected by an attentive reader. The book is rounded off by a glossary of technical terms explained with Professor Black's usual clarity and conciseness, a list of suggestions for further reading, and a satisfactory index. Paper, printing, general layout, and binding are excellent, and the book is pleasant to handle.

If students don't like Logic, it won't be Professor Black's fault.

L. J. RUSSELL.

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*Philosophy and Politics.* By BERTRAND RUSSELL. Fourth National Book League Lecture Delivered at Friends House, London, October 23, 1946. (Cambridge University Press, 1947 Pp. 29. Price 2s. 6d.)

Lord Russell distinguishes between philosophy, pursued as a study among other studies in the universities of the Western democratic world, and the "historically usual sense" of the word, the sense to which philosophy has "owed its social and political importance," in which it has "resulted from the attempt to produce a synthesis of religion and science, or, perhaps more exactly, to combine a doctrine as to the nature of the universe and man's place in it with a practical ethic inculcating what was considered the best way of life." The former view of it is a "very modern" view, and "even in the modern world exceptional." It is to the latter that Lord Russell directs his attention in this essay. In this sense "most philosophy has been a reaction against scepticism; it has arisen in ages when authority no longer sufficed to produce the necessary minimum of belief, so that nominally rational arguments had to be invented to secure the same result. This motive has led to a deep insincerity infecting most philosophy, ancient and modern" (8-10).

Plato and Hegel are the leading examples of this. "That Plato's Republic"—"this totalitarian tract"—"should have been admired on its political side by decent people" Lord Russell calls "the most astonishing example of literary snobbery in all history" (13). Plato's ideal of a static perfection, embodied in his theory of ideas, is "one which is now generally recognized to be inapplicable to human affairs." "Man needs for his happiness not only the enjoyment of this and that, but hope, and enterprise, and change." Among philosophers "the ideal of unending and unchanging bliss has been replaced by that of evolution," as part of "the substitution of dynamics for statics which began with Galileo, and which has increasingly affected all modern

thinking, whether scientific or political" (14). Science, it is true, offers only change, "a purposeless see-saw"; and philosophers have not been content with this, and "have professed to discover a formula of progress, showing that the world was becoming more and more to their liking" (15). The formula discovered, the public is adjured to join the winning side, and those who do not do so are condemned as "unphilosophic, unscientific, and out of date." "At the same time the winning side, for reasons which remain somewhat obscure, is represented as the side of virtue" (16). Hegel is the first fully to develop this point of view. His philosophy "is so odd that one would not have expected him to be able to get sane man to believe it, but he did. He set it out with so much obscurity that people thought it must be profound" (16). Four pages devoted to its analysis do not make it much less obscure, but that is perhaps not their intention.

Lord Russell proclaims his own sympathy with empiricism, which he equates to the scientific outlook, and which is "the only philosophy that affords a justification for democracy in its temper of mind" (20). Its affinity is with liberal, rather than with extreme democracy, and the bond is in the realization of the provisional character of hypotheses. The empirical mind will not wish to carry political action beyond demonstrable necessity, and will fight shy of inflicting present and certain pain for distant and speculative ends, whether these be put forward in the name of religions, of social, or of racial dogmatism. Order without authority may be taken as the motto both of science and of liberalism (23). It is commonly urged that in a war between liberals and fanatics, the fanatics are sure to win, but "all history, including that of the last few years," is against this belief (25). Dogmatic societies are weakened by the antagonisms they incur, and by the sacrifice of responsiveness to fact and reality that the dogmatic temper entails. "For these various reasons it is not to be expected that, in the long run, nations addicted to a dogmatic philosophy will have the advantage over those of a more empirical temper" (26). But in an atomic age the run may not be very long, and since "only through a revival of liberal tentativeness and tolerance can our world survive" (24), it is necessary that "in the nations which still uphold liberal beliefs, those beliefs should be whole-hearted and profound, not apologetic towards dogmatisms of the right or the left, but deeply persuaded of the value of liberty, scientific freedom, and mutual forbearance" (27).

It would thus seem that Lord Russell's final appeal is to faith in the nineteenth-century formula of science, liberty, and progress (cf. 11). Such a formula represents the things he finds to his liking in the world; he is satisfied of its social strength; and he asserts its moral superiority (26). It does not, however, seem to be on any very different plane of cogency from the philosophies that he rejects. It may also be felt that his implied picture of science cooing with considerate respect for other modes of feeling and thought, if it is meant to represent history and not ideal, is somewhat overdone. Science, and scientific liberalism too, have had their days of dogmatism. The scientific economics of Ricardo bears an equal responsibility with Hegelianism for Marxian dogmatism. It may be argued that the mark of our time is the supercession of religious revelation as the spiritual discipline of society by political apocalypticisms claiming scientific warranty for their truth, and that in the latter's lack of human balance lies the root of our political excesses. Anti-clericalism was a vital element in the nineteenth-century liberal movement in Europe which failed, and so far as liberalism is reviving there, it seems to be growing off the religious root. In England, on the other hand, religious impulses made a vital contribution to liberalism—as to all shades of politics, without defining any—with the result not only of a more tolerant climate of



## PHILOSOPHY

opinion, but of a more catholic outlook on human nature—exemplified in the relative absence of "block thinking" which Lord Russell notes (7)—which is not without its part in that power of English society to take a strain to which Lord Russell refers (26). It may be that Baal, in the shape of a proper scientific scepticism, can cast out Baal in the shape of pseudo-scientific social apocalypses. Many who welcome Lord Russell's conclusions will feel, however, that a more catholic faith is necessary; conceivably one less insulated from the historic religious discipline of Western society than his, and readier to acknowledge indebtedness to the philosophic tradition that he attacks.

W. D. HANDCOCK.

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*Philo Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*  
By HARRY AUSTRYN WOLFSON. Two volumes. (Harvard University Press, London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1947. Pp. xvi + 462, xiv + 532. \$10. 55s net.)

In 1929 Dr. Wolfson published through the Harvard University Press under the title *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle* a work which, though still almost unknown in England, opened for medievalists a wide field for inquiry and consideration. It was followed naturally enough in 1934 by two volumes on *The Philosophy of Spinoza* for reasons which students of Crescas at any rate are not likely to under-value. But from the conjunction has taken rise the project of an undertaking so stupendous as to leave the admiring spectator at least in doubt if without a large amount of co-operation it can ever be accomplished. In a sense the new instalment of nearly one thousand pages mainly, though by no means exclusively, devoted to Philo of Alexandria might claim the right to stand by itself as an independent work: it certainly exceeds in bulk all contributions made to such studies over a long term of years. But anyone who during those years has been reading and analysing Philo for himself without Dr. Wolfson's dominating conception in mind may, perhaps must, ask himself if the result can be fairly judged until at any rate one or even two more of the proposed sections of the building have been fitted into place, lest the criticisms which suggest themselves in respect of method and treatment should prove to have been otiose if not wholly illegitimate or irrelevant. For it must be borne in mind that very large claims are being made. After an almost breathless page of rhetorical questions we are told: "If the answer given by us is correct, then Philo will emerge from our study as a philosopher in the grand manner, not a mere dabbler in philosophy. He did have the power of intellect to be able to reject the theories of other philosophers and to strike out a new and hitherto unknown path for himself. He is to be given credit for originality in all the problems dealt with by him, for in this particular set of problems he was the originator of every fundamental concept which continued to be discussed thereafter throughout the history of philosophy. . . . It is most remarkable that without a group of official disciples his teachings became the most dominant influence in European philosophy for well-nigh seventeen centuries." We have already learnt: "That he was a good preacher—in fact, the founder of the art of preaching as we know it—and perhaps the greatest philosophic preacher that has ever lived, can be readily admitted," and may be allowed to take the decision *ad avisandum*. In regard to Philo's philosophical achievement Dr. Wolfson at once excites and disarms by setting out a list of authorities who take a view or series of views in which it appears under far less favourable guise; and it is in fact in the working out of his own thesis in thirteen chapters, leading up to the triumphant conclusion "What Is New in Philo?" that the real zest and stimulus of his long investiga-

## NEW BOOKS

tion is to be found. Incidentally it may be noted that the last section of most chapters gives under the caption "Conclusion, Influence, Anticipation" at least a foretaste of the use that is to be made of the results in the companion volumes as yet unborn. At present a comprehensive survey of them all hardly produces so optimistic an impression as might be desired, but that, as has been indicated, may be doing the writer injustice at this stage, even if we have to confess that the *Palatium Veritatis* if ever constructed on these lines seems likely to have a curious resemblance to a famous Jesuit's reconstitution of Noah's Ark seen through seventeenth-century eyes.

Dr. Wolfson's plan serves to maintain the reader's interest as the scheme of treatment is unrolled before him. In three preliminary chapters making nearly half of the first volume we are given under the headings "Hellenistic Judaism and Philo," "Handmaid of Scripture" and "Scriptural Presuppositions" a summary of the main problems and conditions of treatment as affected by what may be conceived to be Philo's reactions to the intellectual and physical environment and his own upbrining and natural predilections. In regard to some of these matters a writer must almost inevitably be indicating his own acceptance or rejection of the conclusions of others: in some he may be marking out a line of his own which may not be the less important because it is stated in such apparently unexciting dicta as the statement that Philo "uses terms borrowed from the mysteries in the same way as he uses terms borrowed from popular religion and from mythology, all of them because they were part of common speech." Again the depth and range of Philo's knowledge in various directions including his knowledge of Hebrew, the meaning, use and limitations of allegory, and the grounds for regarding him as "a critic of Stoicism and a reviser of Platonism" are all natural subjects for discussion upon which a good deal is found worth saying and is well said even if later on the reader may come to wonder if the correlation of "Chaldeans" and "Stoics" cannot be seriously overdone. These chapters lead on to discussions in the first volume of such topics as "God, the World of Ideas, and the Logos," "Creation and the Structure of the World," "The Immanent Logos, Laws of Nature, Miracles," "Souls, Angels, Immortality" and "Free Will"; and it is upon these that the reader's judgment upon Philo, upon Dr. Wolfson's view of Philo and upon Dr. Wolfson himself as interpreter will most intimately depend. No one expects a work crammed full with references to be easy to handle, especially when, as too often, little if anything beyond a bare reference is given, though much may depend on the turn of a phrase and the correction or confirmation of an impression as to the justice or injustice of the description of Philo's treatment whether of the Logos and powers and ideas or of angels as "systematically coherent" may entail hours of work. Most of us would admit that it is time well and interestingly spent, while feeling that here and there the writer might have lightened the labour especially where, as in regard to the Logos, the acceptance or rejection of his conclusions cannot but vitally affect the estimate of his whole thesis. There is at times a fatal fluency which induces a doubt if the position can really be so simple, and while it may seem to some that the author has been successful almost beyond belief in producing order out of chaos, an uneasy feeling persists that the Harvard Philo is much too tidy a person to have been at home in Alexandria, Egypt, and that the looseness of speaking which is allowed on occasion in extenuation of apparent inconsistencies is an indication of greater looseness of thinking than Dr. Wolfson's remarkable ingenuity as an apologist is often prepared to concede. And failure to admit that consistency which he seems at times so anxious to clamp down upon Philo will of course have a bearing on the interesting contrasts with Spinoza and his "overthrow of all

## PHILOSOPHY

those principles which as formulated by Philo became the common preamble of faith in all the religious philosophies in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. "The "hypothetico-deductive method of text study," to borrow a phrase of the author's own invention, has its dangers as well as its advantages, and frankly after collating in the mind scores of passages which Dr. Wolfson has also used, and remembering the enormous advantage which his own training and chosen studies give him in forming a judgment on such questions, we find it almost incredible that any author making, as Dr. Wolfson contends Philo did, philosophy the handmaid of Scripture, ever set out to perform on the ancient philosophers the series of surgical operations and readjustments with which he is here credited. Eclecticism is admitted—it could not indeed be denied—but one can hardly help thinking that greater allowance might fairly be made for development and the same contrasts be recognized in Philo's works as are noted now and again at least in those of Plato.

The six chapters which make up the second volume deal *inter alia* with Knowledge and Prophecy, Proofs of the Existence of God, the Unknowability of God and Divine Predicates, Ethical and Political Theory with sections on the Ideal Constitution and the Messianic Age—the latter compared and contrasted into the Stoic conception of the universal state. Like the curious and highly ingenuous disquisitions on miracles in the previous volume, the treatment of several of these topics has an interest for present-day discussions which can hardly fail to be noticed. In the sphere of ethical theory the student may at times be tempted to think that he is confronting a different Philo because less ingenuity has to be exercised in interpretation when we are dealing, for example, with repentance than has been found necessary in regard to metaphysical questions or the perhaps unduly tortuous discussion of prophecy in its various aspects. The examination in Chapter XI of the "Unknowability of God and Divine Predicates" develop arguments which Dr. Wolfson has advanced earlier, and in its wider aspect raises questions interesting for the archaeologist and the historian as well as for the theologian and metaphysician, in which connection the writer's main concern is to show that Philo expresses himself "in terms not used by others before him about God," just as earlier he is at equal pains to insist that "the expression intelligible world . . . which Philo gives to his totality of ideas is not known to have been used before him," and "was probably coined by Philo himself." It is perhaps less unfortunate than characteristic of Philo that it had to be pointed out in the earlier chapter on "God, Ideas, Logos" that the new expression so far as the word "intelligible" was concerned had to be interpreted in two different senses.

In regard to political theory, attention is called, though not for the first time, to the instructive analogies which can be traced between the treatment of such problems by Polybius and Philo. This gives occasion incidentally for a consideration of the place to be assigned to Fortune, as to which Dr. Wolfson rather surprisingly maintains that the "fortune" of Polybius is "nothing but what the Stoics would call God or nature or universal law or fate or providence or the Logos of the world, all meaning nothing but the fixed immutable order of nature or the concatenation of cause and effect," while he indulges in quite a lengthy exposition of what he supposes Philo to have meant by saying that changes in states and governments are due to "that divine Logos which most people call fortune." In his concluding chapter the writer constructs a "synthetic medieval philosopher, made up of all the common elements of the Christian, the Moslem, and the Jewish philosophers," and invites us to follow in the track of his reasoning as he proceeds to revise Greek philosophy. It is not possible to accompany him further in the limits of a review; but it would

## NEW BOOKS

be ungenerous to close without acknowledgment of the service rendered by the series of indexes which add so greatly to the value of a notable book. Is it, however, ungenerous to inquire whether or not the English price of fifty-five shillings for the two volumes fairly represents the ten dollars which they cost in the United States, and on which side the addition is made?

CLAUDE JENKINS.

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*A Study of Goethe.* By BARKER FAIRLEY. (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. 1947. Pp. 250. Price 15s.)

This book is primarily a psychological study of Goethe as an "Erlebnis-dichter"; nevertheless it deserves the serious attention of anyone who is interested in the philosophical problems that arise from artistic creation and from the attempt to define the boundary between metaphysical speculation and scientific inquiry. Professor Fairley provides exact translations of all the prose passages, and adequate summaries of all the verse passages, he quotes from Goethe, consequently the reader who knows no German can gain a good deal from the book as a whole, and in particular from the chapters dealing with Goethe's "Nature Philosophy."

Goethe lived through and was profoundly influenced by one of the most important philosophical movements since the Renaissance: he repeatedly confessed his debt to Kant, especially to the *Critique of Judgment*, and his influence on Hegel is obvious, not only in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Hence it is quite natural that much of his poetry and imaginative prose should have been read, in Germany and elsewhere, as a kind of illustrative supplement to post-Kantian idealism. *Faust*, *Wilhelm Meister* and the poems entitled *Gott und Welt*, for instance, must have inspired thousands of intellectually bewildered readers during the past century with a vague reverence for "the whole"—a reverence that comforted the heart if it failed to direct the conscience; again Goethe's writings must have led thousands of readers to believe in paradox as the wicket-gate to all "higher truth" and in certain vague "laws of development" manifested equally in Nature and in the artistic, social and political activities of men. On the other hand, Goethe's most characteristic ideas are well worth considering on their own merits and in relation to his own personal development; and this is why Professor Fairley's book is of importance to philosophers. It provides an admirable account of how Goethe's "Nature Philosophy" grew from three streams in his many-sided thought—his intense preoccupation with his own wayward poetic gifts, his capacity for devising imaginary models to explain certain aspects of the variety of nature, and his struggle to achieve a balanced personal morality and *Weltanschauung*.

Professor Fairley's book, however, is by no means confined to this side of Goethe's achievement; and, if only to indicate how Fairley puts Goethe's philosophy into the general setting of his life, the following brief survey of the book's contents may be useful. The first part, "Before Weimar," seems to me a masterpiece of appreciative criticism; it consists in the main in tracing out the implications of Goethe's famous "chameleon image," and it culminates in the paradoxical conclusion that Goethe, the most intellectually gifted of the world's great poets, suffered, at least till his thirtieth year, from a really dangerous "arrested intellectual development." The second part of the book, "Before Italy," also contains some remarkably illuminating criticism; particularly in connection with the "Charlotte poetry" of Goethe's early Weimar years. Professor Fairley's most original conclusion here is that during the period Goethe came to live vicariously, and to express vicariously in some of

## PHILOSOPHY

his very finest poetry, e.g. *Iphigenie*, the somewhat second-rate, certainly second-hand, "spirituality" of Charlotte von Stein's personal philosophy. The third part, "Italy and After," contains, as well as the prolonged discussion of the inter-relations of Goethe's poetic, scientific and philosophic interests, important chapters on Schiller, on Goethe's short-lived cult of Greek metrical forms, and on Goethe's "political dilemma." The last of these seems to me remarkably well-balanced. Goethe was aware of a kind of impotence in himself with regard to the major political movements of his day; and he was tragically envious of those young Englishmen whom he admired so much in his old age— young men who found themselves born into a liberal, and politically intensely active, society.

We can now turn to the central theme of Professor Fairley's book: Goethe's "arrival" as a poetic, scientific and philosophical sage. There are here four main questions: (1) Was Goethe a genuine scientist, or simply a gifted amateur, dabbling in geology, botany, comparative anatomy and the theory of colour vision? Fairley comes down strongly—and I think absolutely rightly—for the view that Goethe had a genuine passion and capacity for natural science, which, far from being an off-shoot or aberration of his artistic genius (as Helmholtz and others have suggested), remained wholly unrelated to his artistic interests until he had reached middle-age. Fairley brings out the important fact that Goethe's scientific interests were "unprofessional" only in the sense of being remarkably fresh, unbookish and developed, for the most part, in the teeth of a stagnant "professional" tradition. I wish, however, that Fairley had discussed the reasons that have led many historians of science since Helmholtz to belittle Goethe's scientific achievements. (2) In what ways did Goethe's scientific interests come eventually to affect his poetry? Goethe himself was never tired of insisting that his scientific studies had helped him, as a poet, to concentrate "on the object" to express the individual push and go of outward things, instead of treating these simply as targets for, or harriers to, the surges of his own personal feelings. Professor Fairley accepts and elaborates Goethe's judgment on the point. I think, however, that it is worth remarking that this influence of Goethe's scientific interests on his poetry was very indirect; certainly it did not result in his writing poetry which in any marked way expressed his own original scientific ideas. In this connection the main point to stress, I should have thought, was not so much that Goethe brought his scientific interests to bear on his poetry, as that he succeeded in writing magnificent poetry (e.g. *Die Metamorphosis der Pflanzen*) on scientific subjects.

(3) Was Goethe in any important sense a philosopher, and, if so, how is his philosophical position best described? On this question, Professor Fairley's discussion disappointed me. He brings together many of Goethe's most interesting sayings; he mentions the features in Goethe's thinking that are most relevant to the issue; but his summing up, to the effect that Goethe's principal beliefs were in science, in objectivity and in unity seems to me banal and unilluminating to a degree. Curiously enough Professor Fairley makes no mention in this part of his discussion of Goethe's attitude to the philosophies of Kant and Hegel. This is a subject that would reward careful study (Ernst Cassirer has made a limited contribution to it) and that would, in my belief, help to explain why Goethe never tried to develop his own philosophical ideas systematically. The question remains—and Professor Fairley's book has the merit of suggesting it—what kind of systematic philosophy would have satisfied Goethe; what kind of philosophy could combine, for instance, Goethe's sympathy with the intention and approach (though not the results) of Kant's great critiques, Goethe's monism—based, it is worth emphasizing, largely on

empirical considerations and Goethe's preoccupation with what he called "polar concepts"?

(4) Does Goethe deserve the title of "philosophical poet," and, if so, in which of the various senses in which this phrase has been used? On this point Professor Fairley writes vigorously and, as against those who have claimed that after his Italian journey Goethe "lost his poet's soul," quite conclusively. Fairley discusses, with admirable illustrations, the wholly original, and indeed unique, qualities of the best of Goethe's later poetry: its remarkable combination and interplay of conception and imagery, of lucidity and riddle, of paradox and magisterial certainty of diction. On the other hand there is an important sense of "philosophical poetry" which applies to none or at most to very little, of Goethe's later verse. There is hardly, I think, a single great philosophical utterance in all Goethe's verse that cannot be matched by an almost equivalent, and usually equally suggestive, statement in his prose-writings and conversations. In other words, Goethe's philosophical poems express conclusions which he had reached by processes independent of his poetic inspiration. In this respect Goethe's philosophical poetry lacks something which we find, for instance, in the most illuminating and original poems of Hölderlin, Baudelaire, Rilke and Yeats.

Since it is written as a vindication of Goethe's poetic achievement, Professor Fairley's book has some of the onesidedness of a counsel's defence. Unpleasant traits in Goethe's character are glossed over. Goethe was, among other things, a bit of a prig, a bit of a humbug, a wordly compromiser, and just a little too successful. ("The old egoist" as Heine said so incisively.) It is much more important, however, especially to-day, to recall what was original, what was heroic, and what, for all his faults, was throughout his life so remarkably attractive and lovable in Goethe. He never staled. This is why one can return to his writings again and again, not only for wisdom and instruction, but for nourishment and delight.

W. B. GALLIE.

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*Giornale di Metafisica* Anno II. Numero 4-5. July-Sept., 1947. Turin.

This recently founded periodical, appearing every two months and edited by Dr. M. F. Sciacca of Pavia University, represents Roman Catholicism, and prints only invited articles. The present number is a symposium on the nature of metaphysics and on its most general problems. The sixteen contributions have come from six countries. Most of them are in Italian or French, two are in Spanish, and one in English. The whole is an interesting venture in collaboration, displaying a rich variety of statement of roughly the same philosophical position. There is the Augustinian note here and there as well as the Thomistic, but the most striking feature is the extent to which not only the vocabulary but also even the mode of argumentation has been influenced by the Italian idealism of Hegelian inspiration. The recurrent ideas or motives are the defence of metaphysical speculation, the necessity of a transcendent reality, and the rightness of the *a posteriori* method. Instead of following the articles *seriatim*, I shall attempt a rough grouping.

The editor leads off (*Metaphysics and its Problems*) with a consideration of the tendency in certain quarters to reject metaphysics outright, and draws the distinction between the anti-metaphysical and the merely non-metaphysical attitudes. After a swift review of the history of modern philosophy he concludes that this has culminated in the kind of metaphysics that exists as a solution of spiritual problems. Since it used to be the common neo-Scholastic criticism of the grand line of philosophy from Descartes onwards that it started from the self instead of from Nature, it is worth noting that whether the start-

## PHILOSOPHY

ing-point should be the one or the other appears occasionally in these papers to be now a matter of recognized dispute. C. Boyer (*What is Metaphysics?*) says outright that metaphysics rests on the fact of self-knowledge. A mediating position is taken up on this issue by F. Amerio (*What is Metaphysics?*), who avers that metaphysics is a study neither of the physical nor of the spiritual, but of "primordial experience," that is, experience at the level where the specification into physical and spiritual has not yet arisen. He submits that the constitutive notions of that level are contingency, absoluteness and causality. Another mediating position is put forward by A. Carlini (*Towards the Grounding of a Critical Metaphysics*), namely, that metaphysics is the science in which the knowing self is seen to be co-involved with the reality known, this recognition being "critical" in the philosophical sense. This aspect of the problem is carried further by M. De Corte (*Metaphysics and the Metaphysician*), who makes his article turn on Fichte's famous dictum that an individual's philosophy is determined by what the individual himself is. The writer endorses this to the extent of insisting that the philosopher must think with his whole mind. He adduces as a parallel St. Thomas's saying that "strictly speaking, sense and intellect do not know, but the man by means of them."

The relation of the transcendent to the given is examined in its epistemological aspect by G. Berger (*What is Metaphysics?*); we are driven to the transcendent, he says, because we find that which is given in experience to be insufficient, with ragged edges, open or in the air. He notes that since the given is strictly only what is now, we transcend it in all our thinking. His principle being that a datum is necessary for anything that is to be called knowledge, he excludes the knowledge of God and of human destiny from metaphysics on the ground that in regard to them the data are given in revelation. A. Guzzo (*What is Metaphysics?*) seems to argue in another way to the same conclusion. His starting-point is not the insufficiency of the given but the sense of creatureliness, it is a mark of the Christian as of the Platonic philosopher not to postulate the "incommensurability" of man and the divine but to insist on this relation as a fact of experience—we are aware of an "inattigibile vicinissimo," so intimate presence that is essentially beyond our reach. On the same general theme A. Forest (*Convergences of Doctrine in Metaphysics*), examining historically the metaphysical tradition, finds its unity or continuity in the persistent discovery of the transcendent in the given.

Metaphysics as the quest for unity is the aspect emphasized by J. R. S. Lange (*What is Metaphysics?*), who regrets that the contemporary European thinkers (he writes from Argentina) are slipping away from the European tradition. The same emphasis is made by L. Stefanini (*The Metaphysics of Form*). Beginning with the Gestalt-theory, he maintains that it is the very nature of the mind to unify, the indefeasible unity of the subject being related to its objects in a formative way. For him metaphysics is the study of forms understood as structures, seen as "compenetrating," and seen also as pointing to an all-inclusive divine Form.

The remaining articles lie outside the above grouping. A. G. Alvarez (*The Approach to Metaphysics to determine its Essence*) champions nominalism: since all that exists is individual, all knowledge is intuitive, even the knowledge of God, who "cannot be contained in any generic concept." The knowledge of God is necessarily analogical. That the method of analogy should be re-examined and tried out with empiricist scruples is recommended, after a mention of Whitehead, by I. Collins (*Metaphysics in an Empirical Climate*) in an illuminating and sensitive survey of the philosophical temper in the United States. L. Lavelle (*Epitome of a Spiritual Metaphysics*) propounds an

## NEW BOOKS

idealism of the Fichtean kind: nothing but mind exists except by and for mind, matter being necessary to mind as its limit and instrument. The only article that concentrates on the problem of values is R. Le Senne (*Outline of Axiological Metaphysics*): all our usual values, he observes, so far as they are determinate, are negative, so that in practice it is fanatical to devote oneself to any one of them exclusively, and in theory it is necessary to go beyond them all to the Absolute Value (God) that specifies itself in them and therefore is characterized by them. C. Mazzantini (*The Metaphysical Horizon of the Philosophy of the Potential*) formulates a friendly difference of opinion with the editor's opening article, but with so many parentheses and footnotes that I have not been able to catch his contention. U. A. Padovani (*The Aristotelico-Thomist Metaphysic and Modern Thought*) contributes an outline of Aristotelianism and claims that in its Thomistic form it is superior to all modern systems by avoiding any tendency towards immanentism.

Among the usual reviews the two longest are of A. E. Taylor's *Does God Exist?* and D. M. Emmet's *The Nature of Metaphysical Thinking*.

T. E. JESSOP.

*The Individual, the State, and World Government.* By A. C. EWING. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. Pp. viii + 322.)

Dr. Ewing explains that his task in the present book is to see whether, as a philosopher, he can make some contribution towards the possible solution of certain great practical political problems of the present day—the problems of the State and the rights of the individual, of democracy, and of the prevention of war. Accordingly, after a brief introductory chapter, he deals first in Chapter II with the civil rights of the individual, e.g. the right of free speech, rights connected with family life, etc., and then in Chapter III with political rights, and the arguments for and against a democratic form of government. Chapter IV is concerned with the analysis of the concept of the State, and finally there is a long chapter on international government and the prevention of war. The book is designed as much for the general reader as for the professional philosopher. "I should be very sorry," the author remarks, "if it were read only by professional philosophers."

The first two chapters of the book raise some interesting problems. In the first chapter political philosophy is said to be "in the main, a branch of ethics," and shortly afterwards the author remarks that he assumes one thing, "namely, that some ethical judgements are true and others false, and that we are capable of deciding between them." To this assumption he attaches the greatest importance—"if this is not the case it is useless for me to write a syllable more." Nevertheless, little more is said about the assumption itself, and the student of philosophy, aware of present controversies in ethics, may feel that more should have been said. It has, however, to be remembered that this is a book designed to help the general reader in deciding practical political issues. Why, then, weary him with too much about presuppositions? That this reply is not altogether satisfactory may perhaps be seen in the second chapter, which is concerned with the rights of the individual. This begins with a discussion of general theories of rights, and then turns to particular rights—property, free speech, etc. The view that the individual has "any absolute positive rights" is rejected, as is the view that the individual has no rights except those that the State gives him, and the final choice is made to lie between a utilitarian view of rights and the view that the individual has natural rights which are not based merely on the general good, but these are not absolute, but only *prima facie*. Much of this argument is not easy. If the general reader is to follow it intelli-



## PHILOSOPHY

gently, one feels he must have more clues as to the presuppositions involved, the precise issues at stake, and the method by which these issues might be settled. Rights at the outset are defined in terms of right—"powers or securities of a kind such that the individual can rightly demand of others that they should normally not interfere with them." This, however, does not in itself provide much guidance, since it is followed by the brief remark that right itself is indefinable, and in any case is a matter for general ethics; and the position seems to be further complicated by the footnote on p. 30 distinguishing three meanings of right, a point which occurs again in the discussion on p. 77. All this is, I think, simply to express a wish, which both general reader and philosopher may share, that Dr. Ewing in this chapter on Individual Rights had begun farther back and told us more about the bases from which political arguments begin and on which political judgements are made. This preliminary clearing of the ground seems most important; in this respect particularly the philosopher might well be able as a philosopher to help in political issues.

Space is not available for comment on the third chapter, where the arguments for and against democracy, most of them fairly familiar, are lucidly and concisely expressed. Comment on various points in the fourth chapter on the State, including an interesting discussion on whether one has any strong special obligation to one's own country, must also be omitted. It is, however, necessary to say something about the long final chapter, "International Government and the Prevention of War." This is an admirable piece of work. It begins with a discussion of the treatment of Germany distinguished by its clarity of analysis, and the wisdom and moderation of its conclusions. In the subsequent discussion of the international machinery which may secure peace the same qualities are apparent. In particular, the concise analysis of the difference between a league and a federation, and the comparison of the League of Nations with the San Francisco Charter, could in the space available hardly be bettered. Here philosopher and non-philosopher alike will find much to profit them.

I found few misprints. On p. 25, l. 19 "legislators" should perhaps be "legislatures"; on p. 61, l. 4 for "or" read "of"; on p. 172, last line, for "it" read "is," and on p. 179, l. 14 for "it" read "is." There is an excellent index.

R. C. Cross. -

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*Science versus Idealism.* By MAURICE CORNFORTH. (London: Lawrence and Wishart. No date. Pp. 267. Price 12s. 6d.)

Mr. Cornforth is a Dialectical Materialist. His book is not, as the title might suggest, an examination of the relation between science and idealist philosophy or a defence of science against idealism. It is an attack on philosophers of the school of logical positivism and logical analysis, whom the author regards as disguised idealists. He takes it for granted that idealist philosophies arise to defend religion. Nothing of note is said about religion. It is assumed to be "a bad thing"; and the reader who doubts this must presumably read his Marx and Engels. The Marxist standpoint sometimes obtrudes itself in the author's habit of quoting commonplace remarks of Engels and Lenin as though they were philosophically illuminating. Among the wilder Marxist interpretations is the assertion that Hume's logical atomism represents "the reflection in philosophical theory, of the economic position of the individual in capitalist society" (p. 256).

In spite of the Marxist bias, however, the book is well worth the attention of anyone interested in modern positivist movements. It is clear and intelligible on difficult problems. It is written in a fresh and lively style, if a little desultory, and contains some amusing remarks (e.g. the note on Mr. Drury's

toothache, p. 152, and the comparison, p. 157, of Carnap's amending Wittgenstein to Hume's amending Berkeley, with the comment that history repeats itself, "on the second occasion, as farce").

In a brief review I can only hope to outline the argument, including points of difficulty. Part I, consisting of Chapters 1-6, deals briefly with philosophical development from Bacon to Mach, regarded as a prelude to philosophical analysis. Bacon and Hobbes are out and out materialists; Locke is a confused materialist (maintaining both that knowledge is about our ideas and that material substance exists); Berkeley is the arch-criminal, the philosopher who reconciled science and religion by giving up the materialism of Bacon, Hobbes and Locke and developing a pure empiricism, on which the logical positivists have hardly "advanced a step" (p. 49). Although Hume did not "care a fig for religion" (p. 59) his philosophy is criticized for being compatible with religious faith. Kant is a more confused Locke, trying to reconcile idealism and materialism. Mach is a confused Hume, with a new terminology, in which "element" replaces "perception" and minds and bodies are different combinations of these "neutral" elements. There are three things wrong with pure empiricism: (1) The failure to realize that "we gain our knowledge by doing things" (p. 77) and not "by contemplating sensations" (p. 76), (2) the atomic view of experience, (3) the solipsism which follows from neglecting the co-operative nature of science.

Part II, the larger part of the work, deals with the logical positivists of to-day. In Chapter 7, "Logical Analysis as a Philosophical Method," an excellent account is given of Russell's "scientific" method in philosophy, which is found to be an amalgam of Descartes and Occam, yielding results already obtained by Mach and Berkeley. The analysis of the statements of common sense and science, practised by Moore, is criticized on the ground that it claims to give more ultimate knowledge than science. [The analytical philosophers would presumably reject this criticism by saying that to analyse propositions (or sentences) so as to reveal the ultimate elements of the facts they express was not the same as to obtain more ultimate knowledge. Mr Cornforth might have done more to counter this claim.] Chapter 8, "Logical Atomism," treats the way in which Russell's analysis of propositions led on to Wittgenstein's doctrine of atomic facts, a doctrine which the author regards as an ungrounded *a priori* assertion, since no one has ever produced a proposition which states an atomic fact. Chapter 9, "The Philosophy of Wittgenstein," examines the views set out in the *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus*. Mr. Cornforth rightly perceives that the Verification Principle, in its simple form, is as hostile to materialism as to idealism. He objects to Wittgenstein's solipsism on the grounds that the solipsism of philosophers, though self-consistent, is "not consistent with the facts of their social life. We live in society. We take part in affairs, we are born, grow up, reach maturity, and die" (p. 160). Solipsism, then, is untrue because it conflicts with our knowledge of certain facts. Propositions are verified not by experience, but by action; and the action is co-operative action. "We verify whether our ideas about the world are right or wrong by changing the world in accordance with our ideas of it" (p. 161).

The truth of the Marxist doctrine lies no doubt partly in its insisting that experiment dominates observation in the advanced sciences, and that experiment is a social affair. But what verifies in experiment is still the observation which comes at the end; and Mr. Cornforth does not make clear the role of action in verification, which is the hub of Marxist epistemology. He instances my verifying that there is coal in the scuttle by (1) looking into the scuttle, (2) putting what I see there on the fire. But he omits to mention (3) looking

to see whether there are flames or not. Now (1) and (3) verify; (2) serves the purpose of putting me in a position quickly for (3). "Had we but world enough, and time" we might wait until a self-engendered conflagration reached the scuttle. If some live coals accidentally fell in the scuttle, verification would be effected without any action on my part.

Chapters 10, 11 and 12, "Logical Positivism," deal with doctrines of Carnap. The author attacks Carnap for excluding from all consideration in logical analysis the reference of words and sentences to a reality other than themselves; and hence making verification consist in comparing the statement awaiting verification with the "records" of scientists, the so-called protocol-statements, which need no justification themselves. As a good Marxist the author also rejects physicalism and the unity of science, on the ground that it fails to recognize that there is a hierarchy of organization in the material world. The history of purposive life, for instance, cannot be written in physical terms. [Is this Marxist doctrine really consistent with materialism?] In Chapter 12 there is an excursus on Time, in which the author argues that there is a sense of time in which it is meaningful to ask: "Did time have a beginning? If so, when did it begin?" But I have failed to follow the argument or to be convinced that the question is a reasonable one. Some very odd things are said about measurement. It is argued that because by using an elastic measuring-tape I can make two sides of a triangle together *not* greater than the third, therefore, they "are or are not greater than the third according to the method of measurement we adopt" (p. 210). Both views, the author implies, are equally true. [It would be as reasonable to argue that I can make twopence and twopence add up to threepence by stealing a penny.] The author's point is that contradictory statements about the world may result from the *choice* of different operational methods. One method is usually "better for most purposes" (p. 212). (But surely it *is* better because it *is* in accord with the facts. At least a different view wants more argument than it gets here.) There is an interesting, and I think sound, passage in which the author shows that Carnap's test for the meaningful character of statements—the possibility of translation from the material into the formal mode of speech—leaves metaphysical statements unscathed.

In Chapter 13, "The Interpretation of Science," the author takes logical positivism to task for making science consist in formulating predictive rules from the data of experience. The purpose of science, he urges, is control over nature, and this requires theory as well as rules. [The positivists *have* failed to account for the emphasis which the scientist lays on the distinction between empirical formulae and theory.] There is some robust sense on that old shibboleth, Occam's Razor: "In attaining to scientific knowledge, theory posits just those entities, and so many entities, as are known to exist and whose existence is verified" (p. 253).

The concluding chapter gives Mr. Cornforth's own account of philosophy as scientific materialism. So viewed philosophy has to show the connection of the sciences, their importance to man, and their provisional character. It has also problems of its own in the field of logic and epistemology. Presumably, moral philosophy and metaphysics are excluded as reflections of the economic scene, though this would leave the difference, for example, between the metaphysics of Bradley and Spencer inexplicable.

I have noticed the following misprints: p. 38, l. 4 *detail* for *detailed*; p. 80, l. 4 *word* for *world*; p. 92, l. 24 *facts* for *fact*; p. 219, l. 23 a comma appears instead of an *l* in the word *conclusions*; p. 245, note 1 *Wolfe* for *Wolf*; p. 246, l. 1 *Copernician* for *Copernican*; p. 247, l. 9 *Compte* for *Comte*.

WINSTON H. F. BARNES

## NEW BOOKS

*The Limits of Science, Outline of Logic and the Methodology of the Exact Sciences.*  
By the late LEON CHWISTEK, with an Introduction and Appendix by  
Helen Charlotte Brodie. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and  
Co. Ltd. pp. lvii + 347. Price 30s.)

This is said to be the first book on philosophy which has been translated directly from Polish into English. As such it will be received with much interest. For the works of Lukasiewicz and Tarski which are accessible in German or English and the summary of Polish achievements in logic which was published during the war by Mr. Jordan in a series on Polish Science and Learning have established a high reputation for the Polish school of logicians. Unfortunately the reader's good will towards the book may not survive his reading of it.

The Polish original appeared in 1935. In 1938 an outline of the symbolic system which forms about half the book was published by Chwistek and his collaborator Hetper in the *Journal of Symbolic Logic* under the title "New Foundations for Formal Meta-mathematics." Although the present publication is for the most part a translation from the Polish of 1935, it contains some new material supplied by the author in English. Apparently he was in communication with the editress during the early stages of the preparation of the new edition but died before he could give final approval to the text. On the whole the English reads fairly well. But there are a few howlers such as the pseudo-Latin words "*formuli*" (pp. 230 and 273) and "*apparats*" (p. 266); and there are a number of references to Polish works on the history of philosophy which seem quite pointless in an English edition, since they deal with matters about which an English reader can inform himself much more easily elsewhere, e.g. Kant's views on formal logic (p. 105). It is also rather surprising that the statement about Albert the Great on page 101 was allowed to stand uncorrected, the passage of Prantl mentioned in the footnote shows that the reference should be to Albert of Saxony, who lived a hundred years later. The introduction and the appendix by Miss Brodie give some help towards an understanding of Chwistek's thought and also some indications of its shortcomings. The detached and critical tone of the introduction would, indeed, have seemed rather curious had the book been published during the lifetime of the author. If the whole work is disappointing, the fault does not lie with Miss Brodie or the American philosophers who helped her with advice.

In the first three and the last two chapters Chwistek deals with the need for logical analysis of the concepts of mathematics and the exact sciences. He finds anti-rationalism rampant in all quarters, and offers what he calls a method of "sound reason" for eliminating philosophical muddles. Since the other five chapters, which contain his symbolical system, are extremely difficult to follow, it is likely that many readers will base their opinion on what they read at the beginning and the end, and it is almost certain that they will come to the conclusion that Chwistek had a bad temper and a poor judgment. Every philosopher may be allowed one or two hates, but a philosopher who discovers anti-rationalism or idealism or worse in almost all his predecessors and contemporaries does not inspire confidence. Some offensive references to his Polish colleagues Lesniewski and Kotarbinski and several wild remarks about politics suggest that Chwistek was obsessed by local feuds. He obviously wanted to combine positivism with a Marxism freed from Hegelian relics, but nothing clear emerges from what he says about the limits of sound reason and the "problem of reality."

The symbolical system of the middle chapters has no very close connection with the rest. It is based on a discipline which Chwistek calls rational seman-

tics. This has nothing in common with the semantics of Tarski, but is rather a general theory of syntax considered as part of the study of arrangements. He starts with two marks, "*c*" and "*\**". The first of these he calls an expression (although it is, in fact, a mere mark without meaning), and the second he uses as a concatenation sign by means of which more complicated expressions can be constructed. Thus "*\*cc*" is an expression according to his explanations, and so too is "*\*cc\**". The first is the concatenation of two occurrences of "*c*," and the second is the concatenation of the expression so constructed with another occurrence of "*c*." It is clear that we can construct expressions *ad libitum* with these materials, and also that we can prove some quite general theorems about their relations. For the formulation of his theory Chwistek uses the notion of substitution, writing "*(EFGH)*" as an abbreviation for "*H* is the result of substituting *G* for *F* in *E*." Having developed the system some way in this abstract fashion, he then proceeds to introduce familiar symbols of formal logic and mathematics (e.g. numerals) as abbreviations for certain complex expressions. His selection of expressions to correspond to familiar symbols is, of course, not wholly arbitrary, since he intends these latter to retain their customary relations. There is, however, a good deal that is arbitrary in the establishment of correspondences, and the result is not a system of explanatory definitions, but rather a code which might help in the consideration of meta-mathematical questions such as those raised by Hilbert. Whether it can in fact be used to advantage remains to be seen.

Chwistek's exposition is extremely difficult to follow. At times he seems to glory in obscurity, as for example when he writes on page 95 of one relatively small difficulty "I see no reason for abandoning the notation of Lukasiewicz merely because the ordinary notation is more familiar. Symbolical language requires the elimination of so many habits that there is no reason to give the habit of using the ordinary method of notation special consideration." For my own part I confess that I have found his explanations insufficient to show what he is doing in certain parts of his book, but I have a strong suspicion that a good deal of what he says is vitiated by a failure to distinguish consistently between the use and the mention of symbols. When he writes on page 295 "If *E* and *F* are expressions *\*EF* is an expression," does he intend the capital letters to mark gaps where we can insert the names of expressions or rather gaps where we can insert expressions themselves? In a note on the next page he says that they are variables which can be replaced by expressions, but a little later he begins to make free use of the phrase "*H* is the result of substituting *G* for *F* in *E*" as though he were dealing with variable names of expressions. The difference is important. For it makes sense to say "' $\sqrt{3}$ ' is the result of substituting '3' for '2' in ' $\sqrt{2}$ ,'" but " $\sqrt{3}$  is the result of substituting 3 for 2 in  $\sqrt{2}$ " is just gibberish.

WILLIAM KNEALE.

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## OBITUARY NOTICE

### ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD

THE distinguished British philosopher, Professor Alfred North Whitehead, O.M., died at Cambridge, Massachusetts, on December 30, 1947, at the age of eighty-six.

Whitehead was born at Ramsgate on February 15, 1861, the son of Canon Alfred Whitehead. He went to Sberborne and became in due course Captain of the School. In 1880 he entered Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1883 he was bracketed fourth Wrangler, and in the following year was placed in the first class of Part III of the Mathematical Tripos. He was elected a Fellow in the same year by his College, and later became Senior Mathematical Lecturer. In 1914, after spending a short time as lecturer in Applied Mathematics and Mechanics at University College, London, he was invited to become Professor of Mathematics at the Imperial College of Science. He held this post until 1924, when he accepted the Chair of Philosophy at Harvard. He and Mrs. Whitehead made America their second home, and spent many happy years there, surrounded by friends who both admired and loved them.

As is well known, Whitehead was the joint author with Bertrand Russell of *Principia Mathematica*, which appeared in three volumes between 1910 and 1913. This work holds a dominating position in the history both of logic and mathematics.

Whitehead gave much thought to education, and in 1929 his reflections were published in *The Aims of Education*. He also took a deep interest all his life in history, and papers on this subject appeared from time to time in various journals. A profound knowledge of history is revealed by his later philosophical books. As a mathematician he naturally gave much consideration to the theory of relativity, and in 1922 *The Principle of Relativity* gave an alternative rendering.

The last twenty years of Whitehead's life were largely given up to the adumbration of philosophic thought. First there appeared *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge*, shortly followed by *The Concept of Nature*. His philosophy was fully given in three later books, *Science and the Modern World*, *Process and Reality* and *Adventures of Ideas*, which portrayed the ultimate entities of nature as organic processes in which teleological as well as efficient causes play a part. Aspects of this "Organic Philosophy" were also dealt with in *Religion in the Making*, *Symbolism*, *The Function of Reason* and *Modes of Thought*. Since a number of articles on Whitehead's Philosophy have appeared in *PHILOSOPHY* during recent years, readers will be acquainted with his view that the universe is both a passage or process, and something that is permanent, both temporal and eternal, and that an adequate metaphysic must include as complementary facets of the universe both the realm of the actual and the realm of the ideal.

All who knew Whitehead are agreed that not only was he endowed with outstanding intellectual gifts, but that he also was blessed with the kindest of natures and great charm. May Britain continue to produce similar sons from her genial soil.



## INSTITUTE NOTES

Members will receive the syllabus of lectures for the session 1948-49 in due course.

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. SPINOZA'S DOCTRINE OF GOD IN RELATION TO HIS CONCEPTION OF CAUSALITY. PROFESSOR T. M. FORSYTH . . . . .	291
II. NATURE'S EDUCATION OF MAN (SOME REMARKS ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF WORDSWORTH) C. CLARKE . . . . .	302
III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF BISHOP BUTLER'S ETHICS (I) THOMAS H. MCPHERSON, M.A. . . . .	317
IV. LOGICAL NECESSITY. STUART HAMPSHIRE, M.A. . . . .	332
V. LOGICAL POSITIVISM AND THE FUNCTION OF REASON. PROFESSOR BERNARD PHILLIPS . . . . .	346
VI. PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY: GERMAN PHILOSOPHY . . . . .	361
VII. NEW BOOKS. . . . .	364
VIII. CORRESPONDENCE . . . . .	383
IX. INSTITUTE NOTES . . . . .	384

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# PHILOSOPHY

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## SPINOZA'S DOCTRINE OF GOD IN RELATION TO HIS CONCEPTION OF CAUSALITY

PROFESSOR T. M. FORSYTH

"The truest vision ever had of God came, perhaps, here."<sup>1</sup>

In a previous article I considered Aristotle's view of God as final cause and its relation to the philosophy of Plato;<sup>2</sup> and at the end of the article I remarked on the affinity of both doctrines with that of Spinoza. The present paper is concerned with Spinoza's doctrine of God as it is related to his conception of causality and seeks, *inter alia*, to show that his explicit rejection of final causes does not prevent his philosophy from having in it something like the true principle of final causation. In each section I first quote the chief relevant definitions or propositions in Spinoza's *Ethics*,<sup>3</sup> and then state what seems needful in the way of interpretation or comment.

### *Causa Sui* = ULTIMATE REALITY

"By cause of itself I understand that whose essence involves existence, or that whose nature cannot be conceived unless exist-

<sup>1</sup> Santavara's beautiful rendering of the concluding words of Ernest Renan's commemorative address at the unveiling of the statue of Spinoza at The Hague. The whole address is contained in *Spinoza: Four Essays* (edited by Knight).

<sup>2</sup> "Aristotle's Concept of God as Final Cause" (*Philosophy*, Vol. xxii, No. 82, July, 1947).

<sup>3</sup> The passages cited are all from the *Ethics*, and I have followed Hale White's translation unless the text seemed to warrant a somewhat different wording. Except on one or two points I have made no references to particular expositors or commentators. My love for Spinoza goes back to my student days half a century ago, but, with much else claiming attention, anything I have hitherto written on his philosophy has been confined to class lectures and an address delivered to a Jewish community on the occasion of the Spinoza Tercentenary in 1932. What follows aims at giving a concise statement on the subject immediately concerned.

## PHILOSOPHY

ing."<sup>1</sup> "By substance I understand that which is in itself and is conceived through itself."<sup>2</sup> "It pertains to the nature of substance to exist."<sup>3</sup>

The first definition of Spinoza's *Ethics* lays the foundation for his whole system of philosophy. It expresses his fundamental intuition—that of the unity of all reality—in the idea of an ultimate or absolute reality as the necessary cause or ground of all that is. This alone is truly substance or self-subsistent reality. It is the absolutely self-dependent, on which all else depends, and is therefore at once the ultimate in being or existence and in thought or knowledge.

To the objection that a self-causing cause is logically inconceivable the appropriate answer seems to be that the term "cause of itself" (or "its own cause")—like Plato's "self-mover" and Aristotle's "unmoved mover," which have likewise been called wholly unintelligible—seeks to apply the most fitting idea available to what is in actual fact not fully expressible. Reality is not unknowable; on the contrary, it is just what is known in all knowledge; but no terms are wholly adequate to its being and nature. Again, to the criticism<sup>4</sup> that Spinoza's idea of substance, *causa sui*, is a substantiation or hypostatization of logic and of logical necessity, and gives no real or ontological necessity, one may perhaps reply that the defect, if such there be, lies in the method rather than in the significance of Spinoza's philosophy, and that the whole tenor of his doctrine implies that the logical is only one aspect, though an essential aspect, of the real or ontological. For Spinoza there is an inherent relation between thought and being such that what is found to be necessary for thought can be taken as true of existence.<sup>5</sup>

Spinoza's method of exposition of his philosophical principles is particularly open to criticism in that he seems to begin from an abstract concept of being, which makes impossible his ever reaching the concrete reality whose nature and action it is his purpose to disclose. But what he wants to affirm is a reality that is not indeterminate but fully determinate and therefore the determinant of all lesser or derivative forms of existence. Such reality is not the negation of all characters and relations but their totality or correlation. Accordingly the infinite is not the mere negation of the finite, it is the finite that is the negation of the infinite; or rather, each is the necessary counterpart of the other.

Another deficiency, or another aspect of the same deficiency, in Spinoza's mode of statement is that he seems from the outset to

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics* I, Def. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Def. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Prop. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Made, e.g., by Jacques Maritain in one of the essays in his volume entitled *Redeeming the Time*.

<sup>5</sup> This conception is expressed, e.g., in his statement that "it is of the nature of the mind to frame true ideas."

## SPINOZA'S DOCTRINE OF GOD

assert the unity of reality in a way that involves denial of all real difference or diversity. That this is not Spinoza's intention, even if his exposition be faulty, is shown by the principles he affirms in the subsequent parts of his great treatise. It is seen especially in his doctrine of the self-maintaining or self-realizing impulse, which is the very essence of each particular being, and by virtue of which every creature strives after the preservation and fulfilment of its own nature. Spinoza's whole philosophy has this implication of diversity along with unity, although the unity may throughout be overstressed. Indeed it has been said that Spinoza's philosophy is one of the greatest efforts in the entire history of human thought to give adequate expression to the principle of unity in diversity as the fundamental character of reality. Unity and difference are meaningless apart from each other, and an infinite unity must be realized or expressed in infinite variety. This principle of individuality and self-persistence will be treated more fully in a later section.

### GOD AS THE ONE REALITY

"By God I understand a being absolutely infinite, that is, consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses eternal and infinite essence."<sup>1</sup> God, or substance consisting of infinite attributes, necessarily exists.<sup>2</sup> "Besides God no substance can be or be conceived."<sup>3</sup> "Whatever is, is in God, and nothing can either be or be conceived without God."<sup>4</sup>

The ultimate reality, which he has initially posited, Spinoza forthwith identifies with God. He does so because to it must pertain all fullness of being and completeness of nature, and because God must be conceived as eternal, infinite and perfect being. If God is to be all that is truly meant by God, nothing else will suffice; since anything less than this falsifies the divine nature by turning it into something finite and therefore imperfect.

God, so conceived, necessarily exists, because existence is involved in the very nature of the being thus defined. Or, as Spinoza expresses the same principle in a somewhat less abstract form, the more perfection and therefore the more reality anything has, the more has it power to exist and therefore necessarily exists.<sup>5</sup> This is Spinoza's version of the ontological argument for the existence of God, or rather his substitute for it.<sup>6</sup> For Spinoza, therefore, nothing is

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, I, Def. 6      <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Prop. 11      <sup>3</sup> Prop. 14.      <sup>4</sup> Prop. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. I, 11 Dem. and II, Def. 6 ("By reality and perfection I understand the same thing.")

<sup>6</sup> As his alternative proofs taken together show. Spinoza's demonstration combines the ontological and the cosmological arguments, and it may also be said to accord with the logical principle that all necessity is hypothetical inasmuch as it takes the form "If anything exists, God exists."

## PHILOSOPHY

surer or can be surer than the existence of God. That anything exists at all involves the existence of infinite and perfect being, since otherwise the finite and imperfect would have more power or capacity to exist than the infinite and perfect.

In identifying God with the one substance or ultimate reality Spinoza is neither merely using conventional language nor forcing his terminology upon a principle or conception to which it is inappropriate. He is expressing his insight into the real meaning of the concepts concerned and is convinced that he is not misinterpreting but reinterpreting common thought and usage. Taking the accepted definition of substance as that which needs nothing else for its conception or its existence and the customary idea of God as an infinite and absolutely perfect being (*ens perfectissimum*), he shows that there can be only one such substance and that this can only be God—or God can only be this.

Objection may be taken to the use of the word "God" unless it expressly connotes a personal being as the creator and ruler of the world. But it is Spinoza's supreme merit that he takes the bold step of identifying the God of religion with the ultimate reality which philosophical thought compels him to affirm, and thereby makes possible the union of the quest of truth and the worship of the living God. It may be that the God of true religion is more properly to be conceived as superpersonal, if not as impersonal,<sup>1</sup> rather than as personal. But whatever be the solution of this theological or metaphysical problem, Spinoza's doctrine is in principle indefeasible. If religion is to be defined as the sentiment of the holy, or the sense of the numinous, then what alone can ultimately satisfy the need concerned is not any finite object of awe or reverence, but assuredly the perfect and sublime as revealed in the infinite whole of reality.<sup>2</sup>

Spinoza's conception of God as the only true substance or the one reality implies, further, the identification in some sense of God and Nature, or of God with the world which is commonly spoken of as his creation. This is signified by the expression "God or Nature."<sup>3</sup> But he adopts from Scholastic philosophy the distinction of *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*<sup>4</sup> to denote a certain self-differentiation in the absolute reality implying two distinguishable though inseparable aspects or characters. In terms of Spinoza's fundamental

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "At all times and in every part of the world mystics of the first order have always agreed that the ultimate reality, apprehended in the process of meditation, is essentially impersonal" (Aldous Huxley).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Spinoza's own statement of his quest and problem in *De Intellectus Emendatione*, I. One may also recall Carlyle's fine saying: "This Universe . . . is a living thing—ah, an unspeakable, godlike thing; towards which the best attitude for us . . . is awe, devout prostration and humility of soul; worship if not in words, then in silence" (*Heroes and Hero-Worship*).

<sup>3</sup> IV, Pref.

<sup>4</sup> I, 29, Schol.

## SPINOZA'S DOCTRINE OF GOD

principle, *causa sui*, the former is God as self-cause or ground of all existence, the latter is God as self-caused or consequent, that is, his manifestation in all existence. To the one belong the infinite attributes of God, such as thought and extension; to the other the infinitude of diverse modes under each of these, namely all bodies as particular modifications of infinite motion and rest and all thoughts or ideas as comprised in infinite intellect.<sup>1</sup>

It may be held that any such self-diremption of the one substance or reality cannot be made intelligible on his logical principles as an actual significant element in Spinoza's system. But the spirit of his philosophy, if not its logic, involves a duality-in-unity which may be expressed by distinguishing between the divine activity in all the processes of nature or the work of creation (not at one point of time but as continuous action) and the relative passivity of facts and things as they are made or have become.<sup>2</sup> Without this aspect of differentiation or self-negation in the infinite reality there could not be the complementary self-affirmation or reaffirmation implied in the progressive becoming or perfecting of the finite.<sup>3</sup>

### GOD THE ONLY TRUE CAUSE

*Causi sui*, when the implications of the principle are unfolded, involves the conception that God or infinite and perfect being is not only the one real substance but also the one real cause. What are commonly called causes can only be the conditions under which, in accordance with the nature of reality, this or that particular finite expression of its being comes into existence. Moreover, the term "cause of itself," duly interpreted, already indicates that the causal relation of the infinite to the finite differs from that of one finite being or thing to another. Spinoza's explicit statements concerning the divine causation may be considered under the headings: (1) God's causality is immanent causality; (2) God alone is a free cause; (3) God does not act for an end.

(1) *God's causality is immanent causality.*—"From the necessity of the divine nature must follow an infinitude of things in infinite ways."<sup>4</sup> "God is the efficient (or active) cause of all things. . . . God is absolutely the first cause."<sup>5</sup> "God is the immanent, and not the transient (or transitive) cause of all things."<sup>6</sup>

As is implied in what has already been said, God is the first cause, or creator, of the world or cosmos, not as existing and acting externally to it, but as its indwelling power or activity, its inmost reality.

<sup>1</sup> The further distinctions are not necessary for my present purpose.

<sup>2</sup> This is what is properly signified by the opposition of "spirit" and "nature."

<sup>3</sup> I. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., Corol. 1 and 3.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. below.

<sup>6</sup> Prop. 18.



## PHILOSOPHY

God is not the remote cause of any thing or event in the sense of being removed from it in time with intermediate causes coming in between. The reciprocal relations of different finite things or beings to one another are seen as an endless series of causes and effects, each of which conditions and is in turn conditioned by that which precedes or follows it.<sup>1</sup> But the infinite is related to the finite not as one particular thing or individual is to another but as the universal ground or common basis of all existence. This relation cannot be expressed in terms of time or succession; it is in the nature of a timeless fact or eternal truth. Further, God is the efficient cause of all things, not as being only the cause of the beginning of their existence and not also of their persistence or continuance in existence; for the nature or essence of particular things does not in itself involve either existence or duration, since it is to the nature of God alone that existence necessarily pertains.<sup>2</sup>

Spinoza's doctrine of immanent causation is doubtless connected historically with the mechanical conception of nature associated with the names of Descartes and Hobbes. Consequently the action of the world-ground is expressed in terms appropriate to mechanical causation and to the concept of the conservation and transformation of energy. But the philosophy of Spinoza does not involve acceptance of the mechanist principle as the last word in the explanation of natural events. It is rather an attempt to interpret this in conformity with other and more fundamental concepts. The essential significance of the doctrine is that everything is connected both existentially and causally with everything else, and that all action and reaction are ultimately dependent on the underlying nature of the eternal reality.

(2) *God alone is a free cause.*—"That thing is called free which exists from the necessity of its own nature alone, and is determined to action by itself alone."<sup>3</sup> "God acts from the laws (or the necessity) of his own nature only."<sup>4</sup> "The will cannot be called a free cause, but can only be called necessary."<sup>5</sup> "Things could have been produced by God in no other manner and in no other order than they have been produced."<sup>6</sup>

The term "cause of itself," besides expressing the ultimate identity of essence and existence, also indicates the true unity of freedom and necessity. That God is the only fully free cause follows from the fact that his nature alone essentially involves existence. And the same principle implies that God's activity is a necessity of his nature, or rather that his nature and his activity are one and the same thing. What follows from the existence and nature of God may be called the expression of his will, but not in a sense that would make this will arbitrary or anything less than his whole being. Hence there is no

<sup>1</sup> Prop. 28 and Schol.

<sup>2</sup> Prop. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Prop. 24.

<sup>4</sup> Prop. 32.

<sup>5</sup> Def. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Prop. 33.

## SPINOZA'S DOCTRINE OF GOD

real distinction between the truly necessary and the actually possible;<sup>1</sup> for whatever has power or reality enough to exist does exist and with the degree of perfection involved in its own nature.

Further, since all things are determined to existence and action by God as following from the necessity of his nature, there is nothing that exists or happens in the world which does not result of necessity from determinate causes or conditions.<sup>2</sup> Along with all other finite things and creatures man's activity is thus necessitated. But none the less the finite individual shares in the freedom of God, so that his action is free in proportion as it is determined from within by his own proper nature and not merely by conditions external to himself.

Spinoza thus denies free will in the sense of an indeterminism that implies the "liberty of indifference,"<sup>3</sup> or an absolute power of choosing between alternative courses of action altogether independently of the agent's dispositions and beliefs and the bearing upon these of the conditions involved in his relations to other beings and things. Freedom and necessity are ultimately one, and the only valid opposition between them is that of the relative predominance of internal or of external factors in the determination of any particular action or course of action. An act is free just in so far as it is the expression of the agent's innermost being. There is nothing, therefore, in Spinoza's denial of absolute freedom of will that is inconsistent with his conception of the liberating power or influence of "adequate ideas," or the entrance into the human mind of the truth that makes men free. The one principle is indeed the complement of the other.

(3) *God does not act for an end.*—"There is no cause, either without or within himself, that moves God to act except the perfection of his own nature."<sup>4</sup> "It is commonly supposed that God directs all

<sup>1</sup> Leibniz's conception that God in creating the universe acts in accordance not with the only possibility but with his choice of the best—which is regarded as uniting efficient and final causation—shows the distinction between abstract and concrete possibility, but cannot be taken to express a wholly different principle from that of Spinoza. Cf. the statement: "The divine perfection . . . could also be manifested through other creatures in another order" (Johannes Stüßler—following Thomas Aquinas—in *Why God Created the World*), which is likewise tenable only if it precludes the idea of an arbitrary volition.

<sup>2</sup> I, 26-29 and II, 48.

<sup>3</sup> The stress laid by Descartes upon the influence of will on judgment—like a similar principle in Bacon's philosophy—concerns the need of suspense of judgment, or the avoidance (as he puts it) of "precipitancy and anticipation" in judgment through bias or undue haste, and does not properly involve the liberty of indifference. But Spinoza expressly rejects an antithesis of will and intellect in so far as it suggests that volition and judgment do not depend essentially on ideas. ("There is in the mind no volition or affirmation and negation save that which an idea as such involves." II, 49 with Corol. and Schol.)

<sup>4</sup> I, 17. Corol. 1.

## PHILOSOPHY

things to some determinate end. . . . This doctrine does away with God's perfection. For if God acts for the sake of an end, he necessarily seeks something of which he stands in need."<sup>1</sup>

Spinoza's argument here is that action for the sake of an end is a mark of a finite and imperfect being, whose existence can only be maintained or whose true nature can only be realized by seeking and attaining a goal beyond actual fulfilment. Such a conception, implying as it does a lack or want in the agent concerned, is meaningless in reference to an infinite and perfect being whose nature is eternally complete. If we are to speak of a divine purpose at all, it can only be in the sense that it belongs to the perfection of God's nature that he should manifest himself in the creation of finite beings who can share in that perfection according to the degree in which they attain self-realization. This signifies not any external but an immanent end.

Spinoza's doctrine on this point is linked with his denial of final causes in nature. Man habitually acts for some end and devises means to its attainment, and he thinks that the same is true of nature or creation generally. More particularly, he thinks that God has made all things for the sake of man—to serve the ends and purposes of human beings—and that things and events in nature can be judged to be good or bad according as they do or do not further the fulfilment of these ends. But "the perfection of things is to be judged by their own nature and power alone." In the infinite fullness of his being there is nothing wanting to God "for the creation of everything, from the highest down to the lowest grade of perfection"; and things have no other reason than the expression of his being.<sup>2</sup> As products or manifestations of the divine nature and power they have no end external to themselves, since their being is actualized in the maintenance and development of their own natures, albeit also in the service of all other things in the pursuit of like ends.

### CAUSATION AS SELF-EXPRESSION OF THE ETERNAL REALITY

"God's omnipotence has been actual from eternity, and to eternity will remain in the same actuality."<sup>3</sup> "By eternity I understand existence itself, so far as it is conceived to follow necessarily from the definition alone of the eternal thing. Such existence cannot be explained by duration or time, even if the duration be conceived as without beginning or end."<sup>4</sup> "It is of the nature of reason to perceive things under a certain form of eternity."<sup>5</sup> "We feel and know (or experience) that we are eternal."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I, Append.; cf. Prop. 33, Schol. 2 *fin.*

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.; cf. IV, Pref.

<sup>3</sup> I, 17, Schol., where the necessity with which things follow from the existence and nature of God is illustrated by reference to "necessary" or "eternal" truth.

<sup>4</sup> I, Def. 8 and Expl.

<sup>5</sup> II, 44, Corol. 2.

<sup>6</sup> V, 23, Schol.

## SPINOZA'S DOCTRINE OF GOD

The various aspects of Spinoza's doctrine of causation, when taken together, give the fundamental principle indicated by the above citations. That God's causality is immanent causality, that it is alike free and necessary, and that it has no external purpose signify that the causality concerned is the self-expression of the ultimate reality, or *causa sui*, as the eternal ground of all existence. Such causality must be conceived after the fashion or on the analogy of necessary truth, or of the relation of ground and consequent rather than temporal succession.<sup>1</sup> It implies an order or sequence of which relations in time are only the symbol or outward semblance.<sup>2</sup> The fundamental order in terms of which the relations of things must ultimately be understood is that of different essences or individual natures and different levels of existence as determinate expressions of the being and nature of God.<sup>3</sup>

Spinoza's doctrine seems at first sight to be altogether incompatible with the reality in any sense of time or duration.<sup>4</sup> But the distinction of eternity as the character of true reality from mere everlastingness or endurance throughout all time does not imply timelessness in the sense of being that is out of all relation to time. It means rather that eternity is the *truth* of time, as freedom is of necessity or as spirit is of nature or matter. Time or duration must be explained through the nature of eternity and not contrariwise. Duration may be defined as the process of change or transition from a lower to a higher or a higher to a lower degree of perfection, and it presupposes the eternal actuality of perfect being.<sup>5</sup>

Further, eternity or eternal life must be understood as a quality rather than a quantity of existence,<sup>6</sup> and as participated in by finite beings according as they rise above mere conditions of time and place. For eternity can have no meaning for us unless it can in some degree enter into our experience here and now. There are, indeed, experiences in life in which one feels that the moment is itself eternal, that

<sup>1</sup> Joachim points out that the categories of ground and consequent, cause and effect, whole and part are all inadequate to express the immanence of God in the universe (*The Ethics of Spinoza*, pp. 118-19).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Plato's definition of time as the "moving image of eternity."

<sup>3</sup> My statement in this section owes much to Prof. H. F. Hallett's article on "Spinoza's Conception of Eternity" in *Mind*, vol. xxxvii, N.S., No. 147. I have not at hand for reference his *Aeternitas* in which the subject is treated at length.

<sup>4</sup> Time is distinguishable from duration—which Spinoza defines as "the indefinite continuation of existence" (II, Def. 5)—as its measurement by means of a comparison of durations, or, as Aristotle puts it, "the numbering of motion"; though common usage tends to identify them.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Aristotle's principle of the primacy of actuality, which I endeavoured to set forth in the article mentioned above.

<sup>6</sup> For Spinoza's opposition of eternity and duration in reference to the question of immortality, see V, 34, Schol.

## PHILOSOPHY

eternity is in the experience in such wise that time and change can never make it really pass away. To see things thus "under the form of eternity," that is, as having, each in its own time and place, an eternal existence and significance, and to live in the spirit of such insight, is to possess something of the perfection and joy of true being.

### THE NISUS TOWARDS PERFECTION OR SELF-REALIZATION

"Each thing endeavours to persevere in its own being." "The effort by which each thing so endeavours is nothing but the actual essence (or nature) of the thing itself."<sup>1</sup> "Desire is the very essence of man in so far as determined to any action by any affect whatsoever." "Joy is man's passage from a less to a greater perfection."<sup>2</sup> "The actions of the mind arise from adequate ideas alone, but the passions depend alone upon those which are inadequate."<sup>3</sup>

As already said, the principle of differentiation along with the unity of reality is expressed, in Spinoza's philosophy, more especially in terms of the self-maintaining or self-realizing impulse (*conatus in suo esse perseverare*). It has also been noted that it belongs inherently to the finite and imperfect to aim at a goal or ideal beyond actual attainment. The essential character, therefore, of the finite—in its quest of the infinite and perfect, which is at the same time the presence of the infinite in it—is found in striving, endeavour, or desire. Desire, being the impulse to satisfy a want or need, is essentially for self-fulfilment. Such desire or aspiration is the efficient cause whereby the end or ideal goal is in any measure realized. Here, therefore, efficient and final cause are one.

Further, the sense or feeling of attainment is experienced as joy or happiness, which is the sign of upward as against downward tendency. In general, any affect or emotion ceases to be a mere passion and becomes action in proportion as it is controlled or sublimated through the power of adequate ideas, more particularly a true knowledge of oneself and of the causes of the emotions. Herein lies the road from bondage to liberty, and thereby to participation in some small measure in the blessedness of God. This impulse in virtue of which the finite individual aspires to its own perfection is, indeed, the self-affirmation of God in us, and is at once the affirmation of the individual self as a unique expression of the infinite divine nature and its negation as a self-centred or self-sufficient unit.

### THE INTELLECTUAL LOVE OF GOD

"Whatever we apprehend by 'intuitive knowledge' brings us the greatest satisfaction of mind (or acquiescence), and so the greatest

<sup>1</sup> III, 6 and 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Definitions of the Affects or Emotions.

<sup>3</sup> Prop. 3.

## SPINOZA'S DOCTRINE OF GOD

joy, accompanied with the idea of God as its cause. . . . From this kind of knowledge, therefore, necessarily springs the intellectual love of God."<sup>1</sup> "He who loves God cannot seek that God should love him in return."<sup>2</sup> "The intellectual love of the mind towards God is part of the infinite love with which God loves himself. . . . Hence the love of God towards men and the intellectual love of the mind towards God are one and the same thing."<sup>3</sup>

These propositions must suffice to indicate the significance of the culminating phase of Spinoza's philosophy. According to his distinction of different kinds or stages of knowledge,<sup>4</sup> as the mind rises from the mere particulars of time and circumstance as apprehended in sense-perception and memory (*imaginatio*) through the universals of thought or reason (*ratio*) to what he calls intuitive knowledge (*scientia intuitiva*), that is, an intellectual intuition or insight which apprehends particular things and events in all their concrete reality as features of the universal order and therefore as necessarily following from the being and nature of God, it comes to acquiesce in that order not merely as the only possible one but also as an order of love. For, rightly apprehended, it is such as reveals a being that is at once supremely powerful and supremely wise and good, and so meets all the needs of the human spirit. This, then, is that "infinite and eternal object"'s in the contemplation of which the mind is alone filled with a love that yields lasting joy and happiness.

Putting together the several strands of Spinoza's philosophy one sees that, whatever may be its deficiencies of logic and method, its essential import is not in doubt. What it teaches is that it is of the very nature of an infinite and perfect being to be manifested in finite individuals who can seek and find their true good in union with their immanent cause and end—a union which is at the same time that of each with all. This relation of the finite and the infinite implies that the divine activity creating, sustaining and controlling all things is not that of mere external power and compulsion but rather the inspiring and persuasive power of infinite love. The response of the finite individual has at its highest level the character of a rationally grounded and disinterested "love towards God" as the supreme reality made manifest in the whole universe of being. Thus the movement or process of the finite towards the infinite and the boundless self-giving of the infinite to the finite are one and the same fact. As the theologian expresses it, "Our opening and His entering are one moment."

<sup>1</sup> V, 32 and Corol.

<sup>4</sup> II, 40, Schol. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Prop. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Prop. 36 and Corol.

<sup>5</sup> *De Int. Emend.*, I, 10.

# NATURE'S EDUCATION OF MAN

## SOME REMARKS ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF WORDSWORTH

C. CLARKE.

THE essence of Wordsworth's creed appears, at first glance, to be simple and unambiguous: if we train the eye and ear to become receptive to the influence of natural objects, we come in time to receive "authentic tidings of invisible things," intuitive knowledge of a Spirit which informs both Nature and the mind of man. This Spirit is a source of spiritual power; communion with it brings serenity and joy. But for all the apparent simplicity of this creed, we are soon forced to ask difficult questions about it. For example, how, precisely, are we to conceive of this universal Spirit? It is "a motion and a spirit" which informs all things; but what else is it? If it can elevate the thoughts of man, is it itself possessed of moral attributes? Is it, for instance, a Spirit of Love? In order to understand more precisely how Wordsworth believed the Spirit, particularly as it manifested itself in the works of Nature, could influence and shape the mind of man, it will be necessary to turn chiefly to *The Prelude* and, by reference to it, to endeavour to answer the following questions:

- (1) What, besides motion and infinitude, did Wordsworth consider the properties of the Universal Spirit to be?
- (2) How did he believe man acquires knowledge of it? And
- (3) In what precise sense did he maintain that Nature can educate man morally?

All quotations from *The Prelude*, unless otherwise stated, will be drawn from the 1805-6 version of the poem. The conclusions arrived at in this essay are not substantially affected by the changes in Wordsworth's philosophy which began to manifest themselves after this date. In one or two instances, however, a brief consideration of these changes will be necessary.

### I

The first question is the most difficult to answer. Again and again Wordsworth tried to translate his vivid awareness of the actual concrete presence of the Spirit into language that was equally vivid and concrete. The language in which he describes the Spirit and its workings is therefore often highly metaphorical. So it is misleading at

times to take his statements quite at their face value. All statements about a universal Spirit (or any spirit) must be metaphorical; but there are degrees of anthropomorphism in metaphor and sometimes Wordsworth uses metaphors of a more animistic character than at others. It will be necessary to bear in mind this difference in kinds, or levels, of metaphor if we are to determine what are the essential attributes of the Spirit. Wordsworth himself complained that some failed to do this when reading his Ode, *Intimations of Immortality*. In the Fenwick note to the Ode Wordsworth denies that he meant to inculcate a belief in the pre-existence of souls: "I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorizing me to make for my purpose the best use of it I could as a poet," namely, to express the vividness, dream-like splendour and visionary qualities of the child's sensations. In the same way, Wordsworth sometimes makes relatively direct statements about the Universal Spirit while at other times he is content to shadow forth its nature in terms of animistic metaphor.

The first property which Wordsworth quite unambiguously attributes to the whole universe is life:

. . . in all things now  
I saw one life and felt that it was joy.<sup>1</sup>

There is not only universal motion, but there is universal life. Furthermore, the Spirit is eternal; it is the one in the many. In "the press of self-destroying, transitory things" it abides,

The Soul of Beauty and enduring life . . .<sup>2</sup>

From this point we begin to tread more doubtful ground. For instance, Wordsworth frequently refers to the "liberty" and the "power" of things. Frequently, of course, he speaks of the spiritual power which comes to the lover of Nature. But it is clear that he considers the concept of power to have a much wider connotation than this. Power is not merely an idea, or a spiritual condition, the effect of the impact of Nature on the human mind; "ever-during power"<sup>3</sup> is itself a property of the universal spirit. It is the positive, active quality of things by which they influence and dominate other things. It is energy conceived of poetically.

Of the positive influence of books, he writes that he will

. . . speak of them as Powers  
For ever to be hallowed; only less,  
For what we may become, and what we need,  
Than Nature's self, which is the breath of God.<sup>4</sup>

The mind may be influenced, in a particularly imperative way, by the power of mountains. Mountains are to Wordsworth obvious

<sup>1</sup> *The Prelude*, II, 429-30.

<sup>2</sup> *The Excursion*, IV, 1143.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 736.

<sup>4</sup> *The Prelude*, V, 219-22.



## PHILOSOPHY

and striking manifestations of power; they envelop and hang over the habitations of men as a brooding presence. For the human mind is as responsive to emanations of power as all other things in the universe. Indeed much more so. The mind is certainly no exception to the universal law that each thing "feels" emissions of power from the other things which surround it. The mountain's presence

. . . shapes  
The measure and the prospect of the soul  
To majesty. . . .<sup>1</sup>

The concept of power is intimately related to the concept of liberty. For example, the imagination of man, his power to "half create" sensations, only develops when he is free from enslavement to the despotic bodily eye and the other senses. During childhood and youth the mind is held "in absolute dominion"<sup>2</sup> by the senses. But as the power of imagination develops, it frees the mind and makes both the senses, and the objects with which the senses deal,

. . . subservient in their turn  
To the great ends of Liberty and Power.<sup>3</sup>

Both the concepts "liberty" and "power" are embraced within the even more important concept of "imagination." Imagination is at once the liberty *and* the power of things. In the final book he says of imagination that it "alone is genuine liberty."<sup>4</sup> Imagination is a property of the universe as a whole. It is the creative principle in all things, the power which creates a unity out of a given multiplicity. Wordsworth conceived of all things as, in varying degrees, creative. Perception is regarded, not as a purely human activity, but as a process which has its equivalents throughout the whole of Nature. In the lines prefaced to *The Excursion* he announces that in the proposed philosophical poem *The Recluse* his theme will be how exquisitely the human mind and the external world are fitted to each other; he will write of

. . . the creation (by no lower name  
Can it be called) which they with blended might  
Accomplish. . . .

This power to create is the greatest virtue that a thing can possess.<sup>5</sup> In the celebrated passages on imagination in the final book, Wordsworth makes it quite clear that imagination in Nature is identical in kind with the imagination which is present in man,<sup>6</sup> and pre-eminently so in higher minds. Moreover, the relationship of "mutual

<sup>1</sup> *The Prelude*, VII, 723-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Lines composed above Tintern Abbey*, I, 106.

<sup>3</sup> *The Prelude*, XI, 176.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, XIII, 122.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, XII, 378-9.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, XI, 183-4.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, XIII, 84-92.

## NATURE'S EDUCATION OF MAN

domination"<sup>1</sup> or "interchangeable supremacy"<sup>2</sup> which exists between all things is not an external one. There is an interpenetration of all things in the universe, an interfusion of all the parts in an organic whole. He records a moment of supreme intuition when he felt all things

Were half confounded in each other's blaze,  
One galaxy of life and joy.<sup>3</sup>

Nothing exists independently, for everything is informed by the one Spirit.

It is because the Spirit is the Spirit of God that its operations are so highly integrated, "like the workings of one mind."<sup>4</sup> In the introduction to his edition of *The Prelude*, de Selincourt writes: "In the highest mood of ecstasy, (Wordsworth's) consciousness of complete oneness with God is so overwhelming, that his other attributes as man seem to fall from him, and he knows only that

one interior life  
In which all beings live with God, themselves  
Are God. . . ."

and in the note to lines 220-4, Book II, he writes, that an essential feature of this mystical experience is "the sense that God in Nature is one with God in the soul, so that the soul seems to *be* God or *be* Nature." The lines quoted immediately above appear in a notebook, but not in any completed poem of Wordsworth's. They do justice to the immanence of God in the universe, but not to his transcendence of it. Wordsworth appears to have conceived of God as a Being who both transcended the universe and also breathed a Spirit of life and creativeness into it, and particularly into the mind of man. The Spirit is "Nature's self, which is the breath of God."<sup>5</sup> In a later book the metaphor from breathing is repeated. .

. . . Great God!  
Who send'st thyself into this breathing world  
Through Nature and through every kind of life,  
And mak'st man what he is, Creature divine. . . .

God sends himself into the breathing world; that is, he sends his breath into the world. Nature and man are divine because they are inspired (in the etymological sense of the word) by this divine breath. Indeed, they *are* God's breath, because the breath is their essence. Wordsworth was, of course, emphatically opposed to the idea that Nature and man stand over against God as things which he has made, as a watchmaker makes a watch. But because he repudiated this view he was not therefore committed to pantheism. De Selincourt

<sup>1</sup> See *The Prelude*, 1850 version, XIV, 81-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 568.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 222.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 629-30.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, X, 386-9.

## PHILOSOPHY

points out how several lines are altered by Wordsworth, in the 1850 version, "to cover up the traces of his early pantheism." For example, the line

God and nature's single sovereignty<sup>1</sup>

becomes

Presences of God's mysterious power  
Made manifest in Nature's sovereignty.

But it is not clear that the line quoted here from the 1805 version is a completely accurate expression of Wordsworth's faith at that time. It needs to be balanced, or augmented, by other lines from the 1805 *Prelude*, such as those already quoted (X, 386-9), which do more justice to the transcendence of God. "All beings live with God, themselves are God" because God is the soul of Nature. Without him it would be as a carcase. Nature is therefore different, and yet not different, from God. It is allowable to speak of "God and nature's single sovereignty." And yet this is only a partial expression of the truth, for God also transcends Nature.

It may be safely asserted, then, that Wordsworth attributed to the universal Spirit the properties of movement, infinity, life, eternal endurance, power and liberty (or imagination), and unity. And, finally, he felt the Spirit to be divine. When he speaks of the power or the liberty of things, he means such metaphors to be taken seriously. What it means to take a Wordsworthian metaphor seriously may be illustrated from the following passage:

For me, when my affections first were led  
From kindred, friends, and playmates, to partake  
Love for the human creature's absolute self,  
That noticeable kindliness of heart  
Sprang out of fountains.<sup>2</sup>

Wordsworth is not merely saying here that fountains spring up spontaneously and give themselves freely *as though* they were kind, and that he drew a lesson from this appearance of kindliness and applied it in the field of human action. The metaphor is no such tame and commonplace thing. The language is direct, unequivocal and compelling. It demands to be taken seriously. Wordsworth is saying that his own kindliness of heart sprang out of fountains. The fountains are themselves kindly, and the kindliness of fountains and the kindliness of the human heart is one thing. He is expressing his intuitive awareness of the upsurging, creative and loving spirit that is in all things.

But though we take this metaphor seriously we are not required, as a consequence, to take *all* the "human" meaning associated with

<sup>1</sup> *The Prelude*, IX, 237.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1850 version, VIII, 121-5.

## NATURE'S EDUCATION OF MAN

the phrase "kindliness of heart" and apply it in the case of fountains. A kindly heart is kindly disposed towards someone, and the "love" in the lines quoted above is directed towards "the human creature's absolute self." Is the kindliness of the fountains also directed towards something? Is the universal Spirit a loving Spirit in a fully anthropomorphic sense? In the early books of *The Prelude* there is no mention of universal love, but only of the mother's love. We learn that the universal Spirit is a joyously assertive Spirit; it is glad, spontaneous, creative and powerful. Joy, and not love, is the characteristic word. But towards the end of the poem the emphasis alters; we find Wordsworth writing of the "pervading love"<sup>1</sup> in all creatures, of love in Nature and of the "tender ways"<sup>2</sup> of the lamb and the lamb's mother. But what is this "pervading love" directed towards? The difficulty here is that the verb "love" is transitive. When Wordsworth writes of the unutterable love on the face of the clouds,<sup>3</sup> he is not speaking, in an orthodox way, of a God who loves humanity, but rather of a God who loves—what? presumably to create and to contemplate his creation. The highest sort of love, the pure spiritual love of God, is inseparably linked with creation. It neither acts "nor can exist without Imagination."<sup>4</sup> Here we recognize the familiar theological notion that God creates because he loves. But *what* He loves is—creating. We hear echoes here of Spinoza's Intellectual Love of God, which is that reflexive love of God whereby God loves himself. The fountain's loving and joyous flow is God loving himself, and the love of the clouds is not directed towards man.

It is more difficult to determine the meaning of some of the basic Wordsworthian metaphors than of others. The metaphors of love and joy are particularly difficult. In what sense can joy be considered a property of the universal Spirit? How are we to understand the line:

I saw one life and felt that it was joy! . . . ?

or how interpret the statement that "every flower enjoys the air it breathes"? Though the metaphor here is a highly anthropomorphic one, it does not follow that there is not some real sense in which it has a universal applicability. The human experience of enjoyment may have its equivalents in the natural world. One is reminded of the use of the word "enjoyment" in the metaphysics of Samuel Alexander.

Indeed, in endeavouring to shadow forth the nature of the universal Spirit, Wordsworth fell very easily and very frequently into the language of animism. De Selincourt writes (in the note to lines 351-72, Book I): "It is interesting to notice that when Words-

<sup>1</sup> *The Prelude*, XIII, 149-56.

<sup>2</sup> *The Prelude*, 1850 version, XIV, 188-9.

<sup>3</sup> *The Excursion*, I, 203-5.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 430.

## PHILOSOPHY

worth began to write *The Prelude* he still delighted to conceive of Nature not merely as the expression of one divine spirit, but as in its several parts animated by individual spirits who had, like human beings, an independent life and power of action. This was obviously his firm belief in the primitive paganism of his boyhood and long after he had given up definite belief in it he cherished it as a more than poetic fancy." In the book on childhood there are two obvious examples of this primitivism. There are the lines in which he describes how he stole trapped woodcocks and heard

Low breathings coming after me, and sounds  
Of undistinguishable motion, steps  
Almost as silent as the turf they trod.<sup>1</sup>

And there is the episode of the stolen boat.<sup>2</sup> But such language is not confined to the first book. In the later books which tell of the experiences of youth and manhood traces of the early paganism are still visible. When he is describing his experience in the Simplon Pass, he tells how waterfalls, rocks and winds all seemed to him "like workings of one mind." Yet in this very passage where he is recording an intuition of the unity of the Spirit, he drops for two or three lines into language which bears the unmistakable marks of a more primitive belief:

The rocks that mutter'd close upon our ears,  
Black drizzling crags that spake by the way-side  
As if a voice were in them . . .<sup>3</sup>

We are reminded here of the Fenwick note on the Ode, *Intimations*, which has been already quoted. The notion that rocks mutter, like the notion of pre-existence, has sufficient foundation in humanity for authorizing Wordsworth to make for his purpose the best use he can of it as a poet. The result is a sort of animism, but again it cannot be negligently dismissed as "mere" animism. The basic ideas of the life, mutual domination and interpenetration of all things are here being expressed in terms of a very appropriate myth. All the separate ideas of universal life, power and so on are compositely and concretely felt when we read of crags that speak by the wayside. The intimate interpenetration of things is suggested by "the rocks that mutter'd close upon our ears." The low breathings that came after the poet as a child were not, it is true, the breathings of an individual spirit, but nor were they entirely unreal. They were a manifestation of the intimate domination of the mind by Nature.

The basic Wordsworthian metaphors, such as power and liberty, are drawn from the sphere of human mental activity and invested with a less restricted and grander significance. In the new universe of discourse they shed many of their distinctively human associations.

<sup>1</sup> *The Prelude*, I, 330-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 409-12.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 562-4.

## NATURE'S EDUCATION OF MAN

We have been trying to distinguish these metaphors from those such as "love," which retain many of their human associations even in their new setting—and are intended to do so. Any endeavour to determine what properties may actually be ascribed to the universal Spirit soon resolves itself into an attempt to distinguish these two sorts of metaphor, or, more often, into an attempt (with the example of such a metaphor as pre-existence in mind) to determine how much of a given metaphor is to be interpreted "unmetaphorically," and how much is to be regarded as a poetic device for suggesting vividly the nature of the basic reality. Power and liberty may be regarded as typical instances of real attributes of the Spirit; and "kindliness of heart" and "love," in the transitive, human sense, as instances of anthropomorphic attributes, though it is necessary to remember that there is a sense in which all the attributes may be considered anthropomorphic, and that the one class shades into the other. The "joyfulness" of the sea is a metaphor which falls somewhere between the two classes.

So, in the context of Wordsworth's poetry, the archaic animism implicit in some of the dead metaphors of everyday language acquires an unexpected and startling significance. When he writes of the grandeur or solemnity of the hills, he is expressing "a more than poetic fancy."

## II

*The Prelude* is the record of the "Growth of a Poet's Mind." One aspect of that growth is the evolution of the poet's conception of the universal Spirit. In boyhood he conceives of it animistically; as he matures this conception is gradually refined. This evolution corresponds with a development in the actual process of knowing. Wordsworth believed that there are two ways of knowing—by association of ideas, and by intuition. The theory of the association of ideas was peculiarly attractive to him, and there appears to have been a period in his life, corresponding perhaps with the period in which he was most under the influence of Godwinian intellectualism, when he believed that the theory explained completely how the human mind acquires knowledge. His kinship with Hartley and English sensationalism has been thoroughly established by Professor Beatty in his study *William Wordsworth: His Mind and Art*. Wordsworth was greatly attracted by the theory that sensations are the very stuff out of which the moral life is built; indeed this was in large measure his own faith. Hartley had methodically traced such a connection between sensations and character, and had endeavoured to show that the whole fabric of man's intellectual and moral life is built up by one single process, the association, into increasingly com-

plex systems, of simple ideas, or sensations. But this theory could not for long hold Wordsworth's complete allegiance, for it could not explain, and it allowed no place to, those direct intuitions of reality which visited him more and more frequently as he approached manhood. De Selincourt has remarked that for Wordsworth "there was always this great paradox, that though it is simply by the proper exercise of eye and ear that man reaches his full moral and intellectual stature, yet revelation flashes upon him when "the light of sense goes out" and "laid asleep in body," he becomes deeply conscious of the presence of God within him." Wordsworth makes the difference between these two ways of knowing clear in a number of passages. It is important to realize this because there is at least one critic, namely Professor Beatty, who maintains that Wordsworth remained a strict associationist to his last days. But this is not borne out by the evidence of his autobiographical poem. Even the tempestuous enjoyments of his childhood were illumined occasionally by "gleams like the flashing of a shield,"<sup>1</sup> rare flashes of intuitive insight which had nothing to do with an association of ideas. In the second book he makes the distinction between the two ways of knowing quite explicit:

My seventeenth year was come  
And, whether . . .  
To unorganic natures I transferr'd  
My own enjoyments, or, the power of truth  
Coming in revelation, I convers'd  
With things that really are, I, at this time  
Saw blessings spread around me like a sea.<sup>2</sup>

The mind of the child arrives at an animistic conception of Nature because its knowledge is, with the exception of occasional "gleams," gained by the association of ideas; insight into the real nature of the universal Spirit mostly comes later and is achieved through intuition. But such intuition is only possible to the mind which has been disciplined to receive it by "the proper exercise of eye and ear." Indeed it would be wrong to imagine that, because the two ways of knowing are antithetical, there is therefore a fundamental antagonism between them. The object of the one knowing process is different from that of the other. The object of knowledge through association of ideas is Nature, in the sense of the world of natural objects; the object of intuitive insight is Nature in the sense of an ultimate, non-visible Reality. (Wordsworth uses the word in both senses.) The worship of Nature, that is, the world of natural objects, is not an end in itself. It is to be valued because it leads to that higher sort of knowing by which 'we see into the life of things.'<sup>3</sup> Such insight, however, only

<sup>1</sup> *The Prelude*, I, 614.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 405-14.

<sup>3</sup> *Lines composed above Tintern Abbey*, I, 49.

## NATURE'S EDUCATION OF MAN

came to Wordsworth because he had first learned to love Nature. And it is through an association of ideas that such love develops. Sensations from the world of natural beauty are associated in infancy with love for the mother and also, in childhood, with the pleasurable organic sensations which accompany physical activity. The beauty of Nature is at this stage valued only secondarily, because it is associated with animal pleasures and sports. The association of beauty with pleasure is, however, to be a lifelong possession. In those hours of childhood when "from excess of happiness" the blood appears "to flow with its own pleasure,"<sup>1</sup> a scene of natural beauty, such as the setting of the sun, has a peculiar power to disturb the boy. For he is receiving sensations of colour and form from Nature at the same time that he is most aware of the exuberant life within him. As a consequence, the "internal" pleasure is transferred to, or comes to be associated with, the object of perception in the world of Nature. So there comes a time when the setting of the sun can act alone as a primary stimulus to pleasure and can set in motion, in mind and body, a complex system of ideas, feelings and sensations. Included in this system are those sensations of joyful organic activity which have so often accompanied his perception of a sunset. So the child comes to have premonitions of the truth that there is a joyful life in the sun as there is a joyful life in his own body.

But how can it be proved that this is truth? Does not mere animal vitality cast an illusion over life? Because a healthy boy feels very much alive, are we to believe that all nature is alive with him? Wordsworth was not unaware of this problem. The lines quoted above (whether . . . to unorganic natures I transferr'd my own enjoyments) tend to suggest that he regarded "knowledge" gained by the association of ideas as having a doubtful validity, and that there is a sharp distinction between such "knowledge" (or opinion), and knowledge gained by intuition, since the one projects qualities into Nature and the other discovers them there. But this was not, in fact, Wordsworth's belief. He certainly believed that Fancy—particularly the Fancy of the adolescent—could read into Nature much that was not there. But it was also his deep conviction that animistic fancies were, most often, the crude expression of important truths. We have already noticed that he refined the language of animism and made use of it to communicate his own intuitions. In fact, Wordsworth was not seriously troubled by the philosophical doubt that he might have been transferring his own enjoyments into "unorganic natures." He was not, like Coleridge, racked by the thought that

we receive but what we give  
And in our life alone does Nature live.

<sup>1</sup> *The Prelude*, II, 191-3.



## PHILOSOPHY

His answer to such a doubt was that he did "transfer his enjoyments" as a child but that his later intuitions proved he had not been deceived by Nature in doing this. The wild impulses of the child had proved essentially trustworthy. He believed that the impulses of the child and the intuitions of the man were both reliable. The intuitions proved the impulses to be reliable, and the intuitions were reliable because they were intuitions, and because Nature is good and does not deceive. This is his natural piety, his faith that

Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her.<sup>1</sup>

So we find him writing of

Emotion which best foresight need not fear,<sup>2</sup>  
Most worthy then of trust when most intense

There is fresh evidence here of the importance to Wordsworth of the basic concepts of Liberty and Imagination. The development of man in moral stature depends on the free, imaginative, assertion of his emotional life, in accordance with Nature and the vital, expansive Spirit in all things. He was very soon, in the *Ode to Duty*, to repudiate this romantic ethic, and even in the last book of *The Prelude* itself he voices a doubt about it. The impulsive affirmations of Nature are not, perhaps, always good and trustworthy. It is necessary to keep

In wholesome separation the two natures  
The one that feels, the other that observes.<sup>3</sup>

In *The Prelude* as a whole, however, no such reservations are made. Natural impulses are there regarded as completely trustworthy and as the ultimate source of all knowledge. They bring authentic tidings of Reality.

### III

We have examined Wordsworth's beliefs concerning the nature of Reality and the knowing mind, that is, his beliefs concerning the properties of the universal Spirit and how man acquires knowledge of it. We are now in a position to consider the final question, how Nature, informed by this Spirit, can not only supply man with knowledge, but also contribute to his moral education. There are two questions involved here: first, how can communing with Nature have any moral effect on us at all, and second, how, in particular, can it teach us to love man?

In his notes to his edition of Wordsworth, William Knight pooh-poohed the idea that people who live in beautiful natural surround-

<sup>1</sup> Lines composed above Tintern Abbey, I, 122-3.

<sup>2</sup> *The Prelude*, XIII, 115-17.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 330-1.

## NATURE'S EDUCATION OF MAN

ings are any more moral than people who do not. But Wordsworth did not claim that education against a background of Nature was the only way of developing morally. In Book VII on his Residence in London, he writes of the bewildering multiplicity of sights in the city. It is difficult for the human mind to grasp and master such diversity. But it is not hewildering to all minds:

It is not wholly so to him who looks  
In steadiness, who hath among least things  
An under-sense of greatest; sees the parts  
As parts, but with a feeling of the whole.  
This, of all acquisitions first, awaits  
On sundry and most widely different modes  
Of education; nor with least delight  
On that through which I pass'd.<sup>1</sup>

And secondly, it is not natural beauty, unaided, which Wordsworth considered a great moral educator. It is natural beauty in alliance with other sources of power—and chiefly books, and the sturdy, simple life of the dalesmen. He is aware that sensitive souls who have been brought up in surroundings of natural beauty are liable to develop a deep appreciation of poetry. But he is also aware that reading poetry will make them more able to appreciate natural beauty:

Visionary Power  
Attends upon the motions of the winds  
Embodied in the mystery of words.<sup>2</sup>

It is the *association* of natural beauty with human virtue which he considered so valuable an educational force. This is particularly clear in the passage on admiration and love from the notebook Y which de Selincourt has published, and in the passage in Book II on the mental development of the baby. The baby sees love in the mother's eye and holds "mute dialogues" with her heart. Because it is loved it learns to love in return, and by association learns to love, in addition, all the sensations in the mother's environment. Thus from birth love and sensation, virtue and beauty, are indissolubly connected. Indeed, love acts as an actual synthesizing principle in perception. Of the baby and the mother's love for it, he writes:

Such feelings pass into his torpid life  
Like an awakening breeze, and hence his mind  
Even in the first trial of its powers  
Is prompt and watchful, eager to combine  
In one appearance, all the elements  
And parts of the same object, else detach'd  
And loth to coalesce. Thus, day by day,  
Subjected to the discipline of love,

<sup>1</sup> *The Prelude*, VII, 709-15.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 619-21.

## PHILOSOPHY

His organs and recipient faculties  
Are quicken'd, are more vigorous, his mind spreads,  
Tenacious of the forms which it receives.<sup>2</sup>

and again, of the mother:

From this beloved Presence, there exists  
A virtue which irradiates and exalts  
All objects through all intercourse of sense.<sup>3</sup>

That is why perception is described, on more than one occasion, as a process of creation as well as of receiving.<sup>4</sup> A human being loves sensations from birth; he seizes them; he goes half-way to meet them; he orders and synthesizes them. And when the source of love is removed (as in Wordsworth's case by the death of both parents) the association of love and beauty remains, because it has become an established habit.

The next step is the widening of this association to include others beyond the circle of family and playfellows. Man is first seen against the background of Nature in the persons of the simple, virtuous shepherd class. So again an important association is formed. Love of Nature leads gradually to love of the noble men associated with Nature.

But along with this moral development in accordance with the principle of association, and tending to supersede it, there goes a different sort of education which has affinities with the second way of knowing, namely the intuitive. And here we reach that part of Wordsworth's teaching which is most familiar. He maintained that those whose sensory responses are not deadened by habit but are vitalized by imagination (whose function it is to create and to counteract the tendency of things to mechanically repeat the past), may draw spiritual power from Nature by merely being in her presence. No principle of association is involved to explain how this occurs. Nature stamps her impressions directly on the mind of man and thereby chastens, subdues and strengthens him. But bearing Knight's criticism in mind, it is important to remember that this effect is not automatic simply because it is direct. It operates only on those who predispose themselves to receive it, who break the bonds of habit and sense with a wise passiveness. The compelling immediacy of the imprint is conveyed in the following lines:

Oh! then the calm  
And dead still water lay upon my mind  
Even with a weight of pleasure, and the sky  
Never before so beautiful, sank down  
Into my heart, and held me like a dream.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *The Prelude*, II, 244-54.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 258-60.

<sup>4</sup> *Lines composed above Tintern Abbey*, I, 105-7.

<sup>5</sup> *The Prelude*, II, 176-80.

The water lies directly on the mind and tranquillizes it. And again:

By influence habitual to the mind  
The mountain's outline and its steady form  
Gives a pure grandeur, and its presence shapes  
The measure and the prospect of the soul  
To majesty. . . .<sup>1</sup>

The influence here is habitual but, though habitual, it does not operate through the association of ideas. Rather it is by the constant repetition of unnoticed, but direct, impulses. The mountain, directly and immediately, gives its grandeur and shapes the soul. The mountain can communicate its power to the human mind in the same way that any natural object can influence or dominate another—in the same way, for instance, that a river flows into and enriches the sea. There is no special problem about the way in which Nature can directly influence the human mind, though the susceptibility of human minds to such influence varies greatly.

These direct impulses from natural objects have affinities with the highest type of mystical intuition, and yet they are clearly different. For these experiences are not the occasions when "the light of sense goes out," though they are the forerunners of such occasions. This type of direct moral education through incipiently mystical experiences, is related also to moral education through the association of ideas, that is, through the association of love and beauty. In fact it is only those objects which the child has learned to love through an association of ideas which are capable later of striking upon his mind with the impact of revelation. The child learns to love the object in a general way and, thus predisposed, he comes to receive direct impulses from Nature which, though often marginal and subtle, have a most powerful moral effect, for they are harbingers of the highest type of intuition. In a passage which he abridged in the 1850 version, Wordsworth explains how this occurs:

All that I beheld  
Was dear to me, and from this cause it came,  
That now to Nature's finer influxes  
My mind lay open, to that more exact  
And intimate communion which our hearts  
Maintain with the minuter properties  
Of objects which already are beloved,  
And of those only.<sup>2</sup>

This moral education through direct impulses from Nature leads eventually to intuition in the highest sense. Such intuition brings with it a love of man—not the love of one class of men only, but of all men. Wordsworth had learned as a child to love the humble shepherd class because of their virtue and because their virtue was

<sup>1</sup> *The Prelude*, VII, 721-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 296-303.

## PHILOSOPHY

associated with the beauty of Nature. But the love of man which springs from direct communion with the Spirit is universal, because the Spirit itself is universal. When Wordsworth has realized that human nature is part of a universal Spirit far diffused through time and space, man assumes a new dignity and he himself achieves a new serenity.<sup>1</sup> This supreme intuition of the unity of all things is the source of his moral strength and the climax of his education through Nature.

<sup>1</sup> *The Prelude*, VII, 760-8.

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF BISHOP BUTLER'S ETHICS

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## PART I

### I

THE aim of this article is to show that there are two distinct ethical theories in the writings of Bishop Butler. This is something that his critics do not seem to have realized. One or two of them have seen that the *Dissertation on Virtue* contains ideas which do not harmonize very well with those of the *Rolls Sermons*, but no one has made a detailed study of the differences. It has been usual to dismiss them with the remark that Butler is an inconsistent writer and we should not worry too much over details.

It is true that Butler is an inconsistent writer, but he becomes much less inconsistent when his two great works on ethics are considered separately, and the differences between them are seen to represent a natural development in his thought.

Butler's ethical theory, then, is two-sided. His critics seem also to fall into two groups. First, there are those who apparently have seen only one side, and have offered that as "the real Butler." Secondly, there are those who have seen both sides and have either accused him of inconsistency and left it at that, or else have made heroic but hopeless attempts to reconcile his contradictory statements.

We give some examples of the conflicting interpretations of Butler which his critics have offered.

Among critics of the first class, Dr. Joad<sup>1</sup> complains that the great fault in Butler is that he refuses to take actual consequences into account in judging of the rightness of an act. On the other hand, Professor Prichard<sup>2</sup> attacks him for making the rightness of an act depend on its ability to produce happiness for the agent—which clearly involves reference to consequences. Both Dr. Joad and Professor Prichard are right, in the sense that there are passages in Butler which support both views. But one is basing his criticism on the *Analogy* doctrine, and the other is basing his on the *Sermons* doctrine; both apparently considering that the one they have chosen represents the whole of what Butler thought about ethics. Perhaps

<sup>1</sup> C. E. M. Joad, *Guide to the Philosophy of Morals and Politics*, Chapter VIII.

<sup>2</sup> H. A. Prichard, "Duty and Interest," *passim*, and "Does Moral Philosophy Rest on a Mistake?" (*Mind*, 1912, p. 22).

## PHILOSOPHY

this may not be altogether just to Professor Prichard and Dr. Joad. They may be well aware that Butler has two ethical theories, and not one; but they have not said so, and they can only be judged on the basis of what they have said.

Of the second class, we may mention as a typical example of those critics who have noticed the inconsistencies but have merely deplored them, Professor Muirhead,<sup>1</sup> who writes: "Butler, whose psychology is much in advance of his time, rightly perceives that affections ought not to be distinguished as selfish and unselfish, or made the object of moral judgment in any proper sense at all apart from the objects (wealth, power, happiness of others, etc.) to which they attach and which give them their moral quality. On the other hand, he fails to maintain the intuitionist point of view throughout, and even admits that the suggestions of reasonable self-love, which takes into account the rewards decreed by the Deity in a future life for those who keep His revealed commandments, may be accepted as a working substitute for the voice of conscience."

The other group of critics belonging to the second class contains the names of most of those who have written about Butler's ethics. For example, Professor C. D. Broad,<sup>2</sup> Professor A. E. Taylor,<sup>3</sup> and Selby-Bigge<sup>4</sup> attempt to explain away the inconsistencies and to pack everything in Butler into one system, showing considerable ingenuity in fitting in the more recalcitrant passages.

But Butler's critics have not made enough of the fact that there were ten years between the publication of his two great works. It is surely reasonable to allow that he may have changed his mind during those years. An examination of the two works will show that while they contain some slight internal inconsistencies, the great differences of view are to be found when they are compared with each other. An attempt is made to demonstrate this in what follows. The obvious conclusion is that the later work represents a *development* in Butler's thought.

The works of Butler which contain his ethical theories are *Fifteen Sermons Preached at the Rolls Chapel* (1726), and *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature* (1736), to which latter work is appended a Dissertation on Virtue. These works will be referred to throughout the rest of this article as *Sermons* and *Analogy* respectively.

In the following section the ethical theory of the *Sermons* is outlined, and in Section III the same is done for the *Analogy*. Rather full use of quotation is made here, but it is hoped that it will not be

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Muirhead, *The Elements of Ethics*, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> C. D. Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, Chapter III.

<sup>3</sup> A. E. Taylor, "Some Features of Butler's Ethics" (*Mind*, 1926).

<sup>4</sup> L. A. Selby-Bigge in the introduction to his *British Moralists*.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

thought too full. I have felt it best to let Butler speak for himself as much as possible.

In Section IV, one or two passages in the *Sermons* which raise difficulties of interpretation are considered and an attempt is made to resolve the difficulties.

In the last section, first, a recapitulation of Butler's two theories is given, followed by a list of their similarities and differences; and then one or two general remarks are offered to close this account of the development of Bishop Butler's ethical theory.

### II

The *Sermons* is not completely free from inconsistencies; and that for a reason which Butler gives in the last paragraph of the Preface which he wrote for the second edition:

"It may be proper just to advertise the reader, that he is not to look for any particular reason for the choice of the greatest part of these Discourses; their being taken from amongst many others, preached in the same place, through a course of eight years, being in great measure accidental. Neither is he to expect to find any other connection between them, than that uniformity of thought and design, which will always be found in the writings of the same person, when he writes with simplicity and in earnest."<sup>1</sup>

Butler, in some passages in the *Sermons*, flatly contradicts what he says in others. It might be thought, then, that the fairest thing would be to take his ethics from the Preface, which has at least the advantage of being a considered literary work, and not a preached discourse; but even the Preface is not altogether consistent with itself; also it does not offer a complete enough picture of Butler's views. The outline which follows is based on both the Preface and the *Sermons* themselves; I think it may be fairly taken as representing what Butler was trying to say in the *Sermons*.

The basic thing in Butler's ethics is his notion of human nature. For Butler, as for the Stoics, to act virtuously is to act according to one's nature. The first three *Sermons* are "intended to explain what is meant by the nature of man, when it is said that virtue consists in following, and vice in deviating from it; and by explaining to shew that the assertion is true."<sup>2</sup>

Butler feels that to understand human nature it is not enough merely to know the parts of which it is made up; we also need to know the relations which hold between them. In the Preface, he draws an analogy between human nature and a watch. "Suppose the

<sup>1</sup> II, 25. All references to Butler's works are to Gladstone's edition, 1897. The Roman figure refers to the volume, and the Arabic to the page number; thus: I, 56 would mean Volume I, page 56.

<sup>2</sup> II, 5.



several parts of [a watch] taken to pieces and placed apart from each other: let a man have ever so exact a notion of these several parts, unless he considers the respects and relations which they have to each other, he will not have anything like the idea of a watch. . . . But let him form a notion of the relations which those several parts have to each other—all conducive in their respective ways to this purpose, showing the hour of the day; and then he has the idea of a watch."<sup>1</sup> So with man. "It is from considering the relations which the several appetites and passions in the inward frame have to each other, and, above all, the supremacy of reflection or conscience, that we get the idea of the system or constitution of human nature. And from the idea itself it will as fully appear that this our nature, i.e. constitution, is adapted to virtue, as from the idea of a watch it appears, that its nature, i.e. constitution or system, is adapted to measure time."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, for Butler, human nature is adapted to virtue as a watch is to telling the time; with this important difference: "A machine is inanimate and passive: but we are agents. Our constitution is put in our own power. We are charged with it; and therefore are accountable for any disorder or violation of it."<sup>3</sup> Accountable to whom? To God, undoubtedly; but Butler does not develop this point in the *Sermons*.

Butler, in the Preface, sketches the argument along these lines which he has given in the first three *Sermons*.<sup>4</sup>

Man has "instincts and principles of action" as other creatures have; some leading most directly to public, others to private good. Men, like the brutes, obey their "instincts and principles of action," according to the constitution of their bodies and the external circumstances they are in. The brutes, in acting thus, "act suitably to their whole nature." The same would be true of man, "if no more were to be said of man's nature than what has been now said; if that, as it is a true, were also a complete, adequate account of our nature." But it is not. For man, in addition to the "instincts and principles of action" which he shares with the brutes, has also the faculty of conscience or reflection, and it "plainly bears upon it marks of authority over all the rest." No human being can be said to act in accordance with his true nature unless he allows conscience the absolute authority which is due to it. In Butler's view, "the very constitution of our nature requires that we bring our whole conduct before" the superior faculty of conscience; "wait its determination; enforce upon ourselves its authority, and make it the business of our lives, as it is absolutely the whole business of a moral agent, to conform ourselves to it."

This, then, is Butler's idea of human nature: a hierarchy of principles, with conscience or reflection at the top. Let us examine in

<sup>1</sup> II, 7-8

<sup>2</sup> II, 8.

<sup>3</sup> II, 9.

<sup>4</sup> II, 10

more detail what he has to say about the principles which make up human nature. In the quotations so far given (all from the Preface) he has grouped them into two classes: on the one hand, "instincts and principles of action," and, on the other, conscience. He treats the "instincts and principles of action" more fully in the Sermons themselves. In the First Sermon he classifies them under the following heads: (1) Particular affections ("several passions and affections") and appetites, (2) Benevolence, (3) Self-love. We shall examine each of these in turn.

The *appetites and affections* need little explanation. They are the natural human impulses or propensities. It may, however, be worthwhile to draw attention to a point which does not seem to have been noticed by commentators on Butler. Those who have written about Butler's "passions, affections, and appetites" have treated them as if Butler meant them as different names for the same thing.<sup>1</sup> But in fact, Butler does distinguish between these terms (though admittedly only in his use of them—he does not state explicitly the differences in their meanings). He says, for instance, "hunger is to be considered as a private appetite . . . desire of esteem is a public passion."<sup>2</sup> This is not merely a case of what H. W. Fowler would have called "elegant variation." Butler does not mean the same thing by "appetite" as he does by "passion." He does seem to use "passion" and "affection" as synonyms, but he always carefully distinguishes these on the one hand from "appetite" on the other. Some examples of affections or passions which he gives are: desire of esteem from others, contempt and esteem of them, indignation against successful vice, the love of our neighbour. Set against these is his example of an appetite, viz. hunger. It is difficult to know how to state the difference clearly, but it is undoubtedly there. Perhaps we might be permitted to say that "appetite" is used by Butler for a *bodily* impulse, and "passion or affection" for a *mental* one: e.g. sexual desire would be an appetite; love, in the Christian sense, a passion or affection.

Of the passions or affections, some tend more especially to private good, others more especially to public good. But none is to be called a purely private or a purely public affection. If we think of some affections as being in a special way conducive to private good, "this does not hinder them from being public affections too, or destroy the good influence of them upon society, and their tendency to public good."<sup>3</sup>

We pass next to consider Butler's treatment of *benevolence*. When he first introduces the notion he says, "There is a natural principle

<sup>1</sup> See e.g. C. D. Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, p. 60; R. Jackson, "Bishop Butler's Refutation of Psychological Hedonism" (art. in *Philosophy*, Vol. XVIII, 1943), p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> II, 34, footnote.

<sup>3</sup> II, 35.

of *benevolence* in man; which is in some degree to *society* what *self-love* is to the *individual*."<sup>1</sup> But this is the only place where he does speak of it as a general principle, and even here, should we care to press the meaning of the words "in some degree," it would appear that he is not sure about it. He usually treats benevolence as if he thought it merely one among the many particular affections. A dozen or more passages might be quoted to show this, but one or two will suffice. "The chief design of the eleventh Discourse is to state the notion of self-love and disinterestedness, in order to show that benevolence is not more unfriendly to self-love, than any other particular affection whatever."<sup>2</sup> "All particular affections whatever, resentment, benevolence, love of arts, equally lead to a course of action for their own gratification."<sup>3</sup> "Every particular affection, benevolence among the rest, is subservient to self-love, by being the instrument of private enjoyment."<sup>4</sup>

It has been usual for expositors of Butler's ethics (especially Professor Broad<sup>5</sup>) to speak as if Butler treated benevolence as a general principle co-ordinate with self-love, but in fact he does not do so. The wording of the passage immediately following that quoted at the beginning of the previous paragraph suggests that he is here using benevolence as a general name to cover a number of particular affections of similar tendency rather than distinguishing it from them as a special principle superior to the affections. "And if there be in mankind any disposition to friendship; if there be any such thing as compassion, for compassion is momentary love; if there be any such thing as the paternal or filial affections; if there be any affection in human nature, the object and end of which is the good of another; this is itself benevolence or the love of another."<sup>6</sup> Butler would never have said at the end of a list of "private affections," "these are *themselves* self-love, or the love of oneself." He would have said, "these are approved by self-love," or, "these are affections that minister to the end desired by self-love, namely, the agent's own happiness." The fact that he can say of certain "public affections" that they are *themselves* benevolence seems clearly to support the view that benevolence is not a separate, superior, principle in the sense in which we shall see he thinks self-love is. It is surprising that anyone should have thought that Butler considered benevolence a general principle co-ordinate with self-love. A careful reading of the *Sermons* makes it quite plain that for Butler benevolence is only one among the many particular affections,<sup>7</sup> though treated rather more fully than the

<sup>1</sup> II, 31.<sup>2</sup> II, 18.<sup>3</sup> II, 166.<sup>4</sup> II, 173.<sup>5</sup> C. D. Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, p. 71 *et seq.*<sup>6</sup> II, 31-33.<sup>7</sup> I had come to this conclusion before I found that the same point is made by Dr. Reginald Jackson in his article on "Bishop Butler's Refutation of Psychological Hedonism" (*Philosophy*, Vol. XVIII, 1943).

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

others because of his eagerness to impress upon his congregation the necessity for their encouraging it in their own dealings with their fellows.

There is a sense, however, in which benevolence is different from the other particular affections. Benevolent acts are "their own reward." Butler makes this point in the following passage. "One man's affection is to honour as his end; in order to obtain which he thinks no pains too great. Suppose another, with such a singularity of mind, as to have the same affection to public good as his end, which he endeavours with the same labour to obtain. In case of success, surely the man of benevolence hath as great enjoyment as the man of ambition; they both equally having the end their affections, in the same degree, tended to: but in case of disappointment, the benevolent man has clearly the advantage; since endeavouring to do good considered as a virtuous pursuit, is gratified by its own consciousness, i.e. is in a sense its own reward."<sup>1</sup>

This may be true; in any case, it is clear that what has just been said does not affect the truth of the statement made earlier that benevolence is for Butler merely one among the many particular affections. We shall now consider self-love.

*Self-love* must be clearly distinguished from the particular affections. There seem to be two senses in which "self-love" is used in the *Sermons*: (a) cool self-love, and (b) what I might be allowed to call "supposed self-love." Self-love was a term which had tended to be used loosely; Butler makes it quite clear that for him self-love means cool self-love. Those who, like Hobbes, identify particular affections with self-love, are identifying them with something which is not self-love at all—i.e. with supposed self-love. Real self-love (cool self-love) is a rational principle. "The principle we call self-love . . . belongs to man as a reasonable creature reflecting upon his own interest or happiness."<sup>2</sup>

We do not always act from cool self-love but often from one of the particular affections or appetites, and the object of such action is not pleasure for the self but gratification for the particular affection or appetite in question. Butler often speaks of a man "rushing into certain ruin," merely to gratify some passion or appetite, knowing perfectly well that what he is doing is against his own best interests. Is such a man to be spoken of as acting according to the dictates of self-love? Hobbes would reply yes, but, says Butler, he is obviously wrong. Hobbes tries to explain away all particular affections, and represents the whole life as "nothing but one continued exercise of self-love," and so we have "the confusion of calling actions interested

<sup>1</sup> II, 167. And cf. II, 173, and II, 169.

<sup>2</sup> II, 158.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. II, 34 footnote; II, 52.

## PHILOSOPHY

which are done in contradiction to the most manifest known interest, merely for the gratification of a present passion."<sup>1</sup>

Hobbes does not seem to be able to distinguish self-love from the particular appetites and affections, which may or may not minister to it; his use of the term "self-love" is what Butler calls "passionate or sensual" self-love (what I have called supposed self-love). It is to be noted that Butler himself retains this second wrong use of self-love in passages in the *Sermons* where he is attacking Hobbism, and he does not always remember to say cool self-love when he means cool self-love. But there is no real difficulty in seeing which he means in any particular passage. Butler similarly distinguishes "real interest" (which he calls simply "interest") and "supposed interest." These remarks are important in view of what will be maintained later in this section about the relation which holds between cool self-love and conscience in the *Sermons*.

One further point of interest here is his statement that benevolence and cool self-love are not to be opposed; what we do for the public good will invariably turn out to be for our own good also.

"I must . . . remind you that though benevolence and self-love are different; though the former tends most directly to public good, and the latter to private: yet they are so perfectly coincident, that the greatest satisfactions to ourselves depend upon our having benevolence in a due degree; and that self-love is one chief security of our right behaviour towards society. It may be added, that their mutual coinciding, so that we can scarce promote one without the other, is equally a proof that we were made for both."<sup>2</sup>

We need to note an allied point in connection with self-love.

This is the interesting and undoubtedly true remark that Butler makes, to the effect that it would be a good thing for mankind if everybody cultivated self-love more. It is not to be lamented that "men have so great regard to their own good or interest in the present world, for they have not enough."<sup>3</sup> If self-love were a stronger principle in man he would not be so often led by appetites and passions of the moment into acts which are contrary to his real interest (and, on Butler's theory, the interest of the rest of mankind).

We shall now consider Butler's treatment of *conscience* in detail. This is the part of his ethics which has raised most problems for his critics. Butler is not altogether consistent in his treatment of conscience in the *Sermons*, but we shall do our best to discover what he really intended to say.

The word "conscience" seems somehow to carry with it a suggestion of the mysterious. It conjures up before our mind's eye a vision of a strange faculty that is not under our control and that makes

<sup>1</sup> II, 19.

<sup>2</sup> II, 33.

<sup>3</sup> II, 22.

pronouncements *ex cathedra* which we are bound to obey whether we want to or not. But we shall see that there is nothing mysterious or other-worldly about conscience as Butler treats it in the *Sermons*, although it certainly has an element of authority.

(1) The first important point to note is that Butler speaks of this faculty as conscience or reflection; in some places he refers to it as *reflex approbation or disapprobation*. The notion of reflection is uppermost in his idea of conscience. The complaint is sometimes made against Butler that he does not concern himself with the nature of conscience—"whether called moral reason, moral sense, or Divine reason; whether considered as a sentiment of the understanding, or as a perception of the heart."<sup>1</sup> The passage just quoted occurs in the Dissertation on Virtue appended to the *Analogy*, and however doubtful he may seem to be of the nature of conscience in the later work (and he is not really in doubt there, as we shall see in the next section), in the *Sermons* there is no question what he thinks. For the Butler of the *Sermons*, conscience is reason. The dictates of conscience come to us when we apply our powers of reflection to the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

(2) Again, conscience is authoritative. Butler says, in a famous passage, "Had it strength, as it has right; had it power, as it has manifest authority; it would absolutely govern the world."<sup>2</sup> The distinction between strength and authority is a very useful and important one. For Butler, conscience or reflection has authority over all other "instincts and principles of action" in man. Unfortunately, although it has this authority it has not sufficient strength to be sure always of getting its dictates obeyed. It is in the position of a Sovereign who, by virtue of being Sovereign, has authority over his people, but who can never be certain that he will have control of the army at any particular time, so that he can never know whether or not he will be able to enforce on his people any order he may make. A man's appetites and passions will often prove stronger than reflection and will lead him into acts which he knows to be wrong. When Butler distinguishes the authority of conscience from its strength he is only saying what had often been said before, though by no one as well as by Ovid, "*Video meliora proboque; Deteriora sequor.*" Butler is making his own statement of the problem of insight into the right *versus* weakness of will. "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Butler expresses this universal experience by saying that conscience has authority, but not the amount of strength that would be commensurate with its authority.

If Butler were asked *why* he considered conscience to have authority over the other parts that make up our nature, in view of the

<sup>1</sup> I, 328.

<sup>2</sup> II, 55.

fact that that authority is often ineffectual, he would answer that it is a plain fact of experience. We simply *know* that conscience is authoritative, in spite of the fact that its promptings are often overruled by the appetites and passions. Butler can only appeal to each man's introspection, if he would doubt the authority of conscience. The inference would seem to be that if anyone found himself completely unable to see for himself in his own experience that conscience possesses this natural authority, there would be no way of convincing him that it does.

All this amounts to saying that we *ought* to obey conscience. Butler is not much concerned to discuss the meaning of obligation, but he makes practical use of the idea. He mentions it in this connection. "But allowing that mankind hath the rule of right within himself, yet it may be asked, 'What obligations are we under to attend to and follow it?' I answer: it has been proved that man by his nature is a law to himself. . . . The question then carries its own answer along with it. Your obligation to obey this law, is its being the law of your nature. That your conscience approves of and attests to such a course of action, is itself alone an obligation. Conscience does not only offer itself to show us the way we should walk in, but it likewise carries its own authority with it, that it is our natural guide; the guide assigned us by the Author of our nature: it therefore belongs to our condition of being, it is our duty to walk in that path, and follow this guide, without looking about to see whether we may not possibly forsake them with impunity."<sup>1</sup>

(3) A third point concerning conscience or reflection is that it leads us to seek the good of others. Butler makes this point in the course of a discussion of human nature near the beginning of the Second Sermon,<sup>2</sup> where he shows that to act according to our natures does not mean to follow whatever impulse happens to be uppermost at the moment, but to act according to conscience, which involves among other things "doing good to others," because conscience approves such acts. Conscience leads us to maximize the happiness of others.

(4) Finally, it is to be noted that nowhere in the *Sermons* does Butler speak of conscience as a superior principle to cool self-love. It is the particular appetites and passions (and supposed self-love) that are to be brought before the bar of reflection.

Now let us traverse the ground covered by these four points again, this time considering cool self-love along with conscience. The fact that Butler used the two terms conscience and cool self-love shows clearly enough that he thought they were distinct principles, but from his own treatment of them in the *Sermons* I hope to show that,

<sup>1</sup> II, 60.

<sup>2</sup> II, 46.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

although they may be distinguished mentally, they are not to be distinguished in their practical effects. For all practical purposes, conscience is cool self-love.

(1) Conscience is reflection. So is cool self-love. And they both lead us the same way. When we reflect on a given situation, what our conscience tells us is right is also what cool self-love tells us is to our own interest. "Virtue and interest are not to be opposed, but only to be distinguished from each other."<sup>1</sup> That is to say, virtuous acts are, as a matter of fact, such as always tend to our own interest. But Butler is prepared to go further than this. He maintains elsewhere that it is the happiness-producing character of acts that *makes* them right. That is, the ground or criterion of the rightness of an act is its felicitic quality for the agent. Butler does not identify "right" with "productive of happiness"; he does not say that that is what "right" means; he would certainly have said that "right" simply means "right" and nothing else. But he does maintain that all right acts are also acts productive of happiness for the agent, and that "productive of happiness" may be regarded as the *ground* of rightness. The test of whether an act is right or not, is whether or not it is productive of happiness for the agent. "Let it be allowed, though virtue or moral rectitude does indeed consist in affection to and pursuit of what is right and good as such; yet, that when we sit down in a cool hour, we can neither justify to ourselves this or any other pursuit, till we are convinced that it will be for our happiness, or at least not contrary to it."<sup>2</sup>

(2) Again, conscience and cool self-love are alike in that they are both spoken of as having positions of authority in the human constitution. In the Second Sermon, Butler speaks of a man who, although he clearly sees that a certain act will not be to his real interest, yet is unable to refrain from doing it. This, he says, would properly be called an unnatural act. "Now what is it which renders such a rash action unnatural? Is it that he went against the principle of reasonable and cool self-love, considered merely as a part of his nature? No: for if he had acted the contrary way, he would equally have gone against a principle, or part of his nature, namely, passion or appetite. But to deny a present appetite, from foresight that the gratification of it would end in immediate ruin or extreme misery, is by no means an unnatural action: whereas to contradict or go against cool self-love for the sake of such gratification, is so in the instance before us. Such an action then being *unnatural*; and its being so not arising from a man's going against a principle or desire barely, nor in going against that principle or desire which happens for the present to be strongest; it necessarily follows, that there must be some other difference or distinction to be made between these two

<sup>1</sup> II, 21.

<sup>2</sup> II, 173.



principles, passion and cool self-love, than what I have yet taken notice of. And this difference, not being a difference in strength or degree, I call a difference in *nature* and in *kind*.<sup>1</sup>

The difference between cool self-love and the particular appetites and passions is that the former is a superior principle, and as such has authority over the appetites and passions. It ought to be obeyed, though very often it is overruled by the appetites and passions. Butler had said the same thing about conscience.

(3) Butler has shown that cool self-love and benevolence are not opposed; benevolence may go against supposed interest, but never against real interest. Cool self-love recognizes that benevolence is to our own interest. But Butler's conscience, it will be remembered, also recommends benevolence. Thus we have, again, an aspect of conscience and cool self-love in which they coincide.

Here we may offer in illustration a quotation from the Third Sermon: "Let us hear what is to be said against obeying this law of our nature [*sc.*, conscience]. And the sum is no more than this: 'Why should we be concerned about any thing out of and beyond ourselves? If we do find within ourselves regards to others, and restraints of we know not how many different kinds; yet these being embarrassments, and hindering us from going the nearest way to our own good, why should we not endeavour to suppress and get over them?'

"Thus people go on with words which, when applied to human nature, and the condition in which it is placed in this world, have really no meaning. For does not all this kind of talk go upon supposition, that our happiness in this world consists in somewhat quite distinct from regard to others; and that it is the privilege of vice to be without restraint or confinement?"<sup>2</sup> In this quotation Butler is quite obviously equating conscience with cool self-love on the ground that both lead us to do good to others.

Only supposed self-love could lead a man to think that his real interest lay outside regard to others. Cool self-love will convince him otherwise.

(4) The fourth point concerning conscience which was made above is obviously of importance here. That Butler should nowhere in the *Sermons* have spoken of conscience as a principle *superior* to cool self-love cannot be said to be an objection to the suggestion that I have offered, *viz.* that conscience and cool self-love are, for all practical purposes, the same thing.

I have now completed my attempt to show the practical identity of conscience and self-love as Butler treats them in the *Sermons*. It may be felt that I have laboured overlong in trying to prove a point

<sup>1</sup> II, 53.

<sup>2</sup> II, 61.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

that might have been made by a single quotation, but I felt it would be valuable to try to show in some detail how conscience and self-love are tied up together. The quotation which might have been enough to make the point may now be of use in driving it home:

"Reasonable self-love and conscience are the chief or superior principles in the nature of man: because an action may be suitable to this nature, though all other principles be violated; but becomes unsuitable, if either of those are. Conscience and self-love, if we understand our true happiness, always lead us the same way. Duty and interest are perfectly coincident; for the most part in this world, but entirely and in every instance if we take in the future and the whole; this being implied in the notion of a good and perfect administration of things. Thus they who have been so wise in their generation as to regard only their own *supposed interest* [my emphasis], at the expense and to the injury of others, shall at last find, that he who has given up all the advantages of the present world, rather than violate his conscience and the relations of life, has infinitely better provided for himself, and secured his own interest and happiness."<sup>1</sup>

The dictates of cool self-love and the dictates of conscience are always the same. What reflection shows us is right, is also what will be to our own interest; what reflection shows us is to our own interest, will be that which is right. In short, conscience and cool self-love are but different sides of the same faculty—reflection.

Butler very clearly sees the strength of the psychological hedonist position. Hobbes's statement of it was confused, and Butler laid bare Hobbes's confusions in a masterly way. But, in point of fact, his own position is not so very different from Hobbes's. Hobbes had had a false view about the nature of self-love; Butler has corrected this, but in effect he has left self-love as the first principle of action. Butler's position is a sort of enlightened egoism. Hobbes's position can be interpreted very similarly. Generally speaking, of course, Hobbes is a psychological egoistic hedonist of the most complete kind, but he does have a place in his theory for reason. Hobbes thinks that men are by nature self-regarding, and that their natural condition is one of "war of all against all"; but he allows that they have the faculty of reason, and reason makes it clear to them that wholly individualistic activity tends to defeat its own end. Of course, on his view, reason alone is not enough to persuade men, once they have left the condition in which their life is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short," to keep their contract—a central power, capable of inspiring fear and inflicting punishment on any who try to break the social contract, is also needed. None the less, he does have some place in

his theory for reason, by which he means a sort of enlightened self-love. Is not this very like Butler's theory?

Butler's refutation of Hobbes in the earlier part of the *Sermons* has not prevented Hobbism from reappearing in a more respectable form as Butler develops his own doctrine. Butler has refined Hobbes's crude egoism, but he has not made it any the less egoism. Butler is a rational egoist, while Hobbes had tended to be (though, as has just been pointed out, he was not altogether) an irrational egoist.

However, in spite of the likeness between Butler's and Hobbes's theories, it would not be accurate to call Butler a Psychological Hedonist. Indeed, as far as ethics is concerned, his memory is probably more honoured for his refutation of psychological hedonism than for anything else. If the ethical theory of the *Sermons* must be given a label, it had better be called Ethical Egoistic Eudaemonism.

Butler is not, strictly speaking, a hedonist; he does not regard pleasure as the ultimate good; that position he gives to happiness, and by happiness he means much more than pleasure; he means what Aristotle meant by *eudaimonia*—a general well-being of soul.

Butler is an Egoistic Eudaemonist in that he believes that we ought to seek *our own* happiness. "Though there were an equality of affection to both, yet regards to ourselves would be more prevalent than attention to the concerns of others. And from moral considerations it ought to be so."<sup>1</sup> There are in the *Sermons* what appear to be Utilitarian passages, but these are easily subsumable under the enlightened egoism which Butler has developed—we best gain our own true interests by helping forward the interests of others.

Butler is an Ethical Eudaemonist rather than a Psychological Eudaemonist; although there is a sense in which he is both. In so far as we act according to our true nature we do, in fact, always seek our own happiness; so to that extent we are Psychological Eudaemonists. However, we do not always act according to our true nature. So it is safer to say that Butler is an Ethical Eudaemonist: although there may be times when we act "unnaturally," in that we do not seek our own happiness, we always ought to seek it.

This completes our exposition of the ethics of the *Sermons*.

There are one or two passages in the *Sermons* which seem contrary to the interpretation of that work here offered. The apparent difficulties in these passages are, however, quickly resolved when it is realized that they are merely foreshadowings of the theory Butler was later to develop in the *Analogy*. They will be best considered in the fourth section of this article, after we have examined the ethics of the *Analogy*, which is the task to which we shall next turn. But before concluding this section I should like to emphasize again the main points in the ethical theory of the *Sermons*.

<sup>1</sup> II, 184.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

Man's first or basic duty is to seek his own happiness, but because he is a social animal he cannot gain his own happiness unless he is willing to further the happiness of others. If he does what will conduce to his own happiness he will also be doing what is right. The ground or criterion of rightness is "conduciveness to the agent's interest." The faculty of reflection discovers for us our duty/interest in any circumstance by a process of hard reasoning. This last point is the one I would emphasize most strongly. In the *Sermons*, conscience is essentially reason.

The ethics of the *Analogy* will be dealt with in Part II.

[to be concluded]

# LOGICAL NECESSITY

STUART HAMPSHIRE, M.A.

## I

It may sometimes be useful in philosophy to state a method of argument in very simple and even over-simplified terms; it may at a certain stage be useful to ignore for the moment the details and difficulties of particular philosophical arguments, and to try to state simply what is commonly assumed in a variety of different and even opposing arguments.

That is my purpose in this article. There are many complexities in the notion of logical necessity, and it might be difficult to find two philosophers who would agree altogether and in detail about its proper use. But I believe that at a certain level of superficiality and imprecision some measure of agreement about the use of the notion in philosophy is possible. Many contemporary philosophers seem to be using the notion in the same general way; it is this common use which I wish to describe. It is necessary to disentangle the outline of a general use of the notion of logical necessity from current controversies about what is "purely arbitrary" or "merely conventional"; so many students of philosophy have been left with the impression that philosophy is now being presented as a trivial and unnecessary verbal game.

## II

### LOGICAL NECESSITY

To say that two propositions  $p$  and  $q$  are necessarily connected logically is equivalent to saying that " $p$  and not  $q$ " is an impossible expression; it is impossible, not because we find by experience that  $p$  and not  $q$  are never in fact both true (which is causal necessity), but because " $p$  and not  $q$ " is an expression which has no use in our language as representing a possible state of the world; in other words, " $p$  and not  $q$ " is impossible because it is meaningless.

Most philosophers and non-philosophers now recognize and accept some such general description of what is meant by logical necessity and logical impossibility. But for centuries there was confusion, not confined to professional philosophers, about the distinction between logical and causal necessity; this confusion had important practical effects by retarding the development of natural science. That there is a distinction is now generally recognized, and anyone who is in doubt need only refer to any modern text-book of logic. It may still

## LOGICAL NECESSITY

be difficult to decide in particular cases whether particular propositions are intended to state logical or causal necessities; whenever the confusion occurs in the statement of theories in any of the experimental sciences, it delays progress until it is exposed. For this reason constant reiteration and *illustration of the distinction* is one of the most important practical functions of the teaching of logic.

But no thorough and precise statement of what is involved in asserting a logically necessary connection between two propositions will be generally accepted by philosophers; suggestions have been made and controverted, and there is no final agreement.

I shall first state in very general terms what I believe to be the method or methods by which statements of logically necessary connections are established and used; and then I will show by examples how they are used in the solution of some typical problems of philosophy.

Statements of the form  $p$  entails  $q$  (or " $p$  and not  $q$ " is logically impossible) can be divided into two kinds; those which can be formally proved to be true solely by reference to explicit definitions of the terms contained in  $p$  and  $q$ ; and those which cannot be formally proved to be true by reference to explicit definitions of the terms involved. As examples of the first kind or class any proposition of mathematics can be used, the truth of any proposition in mathematics being formally demonstrable by reference to axioms, the denial of any true proposition being *demonstrably* self-contradictory. As examples of the second class the contradictory of any necessary proposition showing the use of any expression in ordinary language can be used; the contradictory of such propositions cannot be formally demonstrated to be self-contradictory by reference to any set of explicit definitions or axioms. I will try to show how these two kinds of statements of logical necessity are differently used in the two different kinds of language.

Formal logic and pure mathematics are designed as an inclusive system containing only demonstrable statements of logically necessary connections between propositions. The system is founded on a set of definitions and axioms, which together constitute the rules for the construction of the system; this is at least the intention and logical ideal or pattern of mathematics; in fact the system is never perfect, new chains of propositions being constantly added to the system before their logically necessary connection with the rest of the system can be demonstrated; the attempt to prove them may lead to an adaptation of the basic definitions and axioms. But the principle remains that the new propositions are not accepted as true statements of logically necessary connections, until they have been demonstrated to follow logically from the axioms and definitions which together define the system of which they are part.

This deliberately constructed system (or systems) of statements of logically necessary connections between propositions, which constitutes mathematics, provides the language in which physical scientists can state the uniform relationships between measurable quantities which they discover by their experiments. When a system of propositions of mathematics is used in this way as a language in which observed uniformities in nature can be stated, it is described as "an interpreted system"; the axioms and definitions by reference to which the set of propositions were constructed by mathematicians then become the rules of logic or the syntax of the interpreted system. To the pure mathematician the meaning of any symbol or expression in a proposition of the system is completely stated in the rules of syntax, which determine its possible combinations with other symbols and expressions in the system. But if one asks the physical scientist about the meaning of the same symbols or expressions, when he is using them as part of an interpreted language for his own purposes, there are two answers he may make: he may, following the mathematician, refer to the axioms or definitions which prescribe the logically possible combinations in which the symbols may occur; but he may also indicate the kind of situation in his laboratory in which, according to the interpretation of the system, it would be appropriate to use the symbols in question.

The usefulness of demonstrable statements of logically necessary connections as they occur in mathematics is not disputed. Any particular part of mathematics is more or less useful—leaving out of account its intrinsic excellence as logic—according as it provides a language whose form and complexity is more or less well adapted to express simply and precisely the measurable relationship which have been discovered by experiment. There is a constant interaction between the development of physical science and that of mathematics; the physical scientist at intervals is presented with experimental results which cannot be expressed adequately, that is, with sufficient precision and simplicity, in the symbolism so far suggested by mathematicians; the logical form of the mathematical language temporarily in use becomes inappropriate to the newly discovered set of experimental results, the inappropriateness being revealed in a constantly increasing clumsiness or imprecision in the statement of general laws. Demands are therefore made which stimulate mathematicians to elaborate their axioms and definitions in order to provide a more convenient language. Conversely, mathematicians periodically open up new branches of mathematics by noticing hitherto neglected logical connections between the propositions or symbols of existing mathematics; the logical form of the new language thus created often suggests to physical scientists a possible interpretation of the new language, and they set out in search of the

# PHILOSOPHY

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# CONTENTS OF VOLUME XXIII

## ARTICLES

PAGE

CLARKE, C.—Nature's Education of Man (Some Remarks on the Philosophy of Wordsworth)	302
COPLESTON, F. C.—Existentialism	19
EMMET, DOROTHY M.—The Choice of a World Outlook	208
FORSYTH, T. M.—Spinoza's Doctrine of God in Relation to his Conception of Causality	291
HAMPSHIRE, STUART—Logical Necessity	332
HOOPER, S. E.—Whitehead's Philosophy The World as "Process"	140
INGE, W. R.—Theism	38
LEWIS, H. D.—Collective Responsibility	3
MABBOTT, J. D.—Conflict of Ideologies	195
MACBEATH, A.—Duty	99
MCPHERSON, THOMAS—The Development of Bishop Butler's Ethics (1)	317
PHILLIPS, BERNARD—Logical Positivism and the Function of Reason	346
PRICE, H. H.—"Thinking and Meaning" (Professor Ayer's Inaugural Lecture)	239
SPROTT, W. J. H.—Psychology and the Moral Problems of Our Time	227
WADIA, A. R.—Buddha as a Revolutionary Force in Indian Culture	116
WHITROW, G. J.—On the Foundations and Application of Finite Classical Arithmetic	256

## DISCUSSIONS

FOSTER, M. B.—A Study of History	72
SAMUEL, VISCOUNT, AYER, A. J., DINGLE, H.—Philosophy without Science	60, 65, 66

## PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEYS

Philosophy in Germany—F. H. HEINEMANN	361
Philosophy in Italy—G. DE RUGGIERO	80, 262

## NEW BOOKS

ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY—Supplementary Volume XX: Logic and Reality (M. Macdonald)	370
AYER, A. J.—Language, Truth and Logic (L. J. Russell)	173
BLACK, MAX—Critical Thinking. An Introduction to Logic and Scientific Method (L. J. Russell)	268
BLAU, JOSEPH L. (editor)—American Philosophic Addresses 1700-1900 (F. H. Heinemann)	376
BUBER, MARTIN—Between Man and Man (Helen Wodehouse)	177
BYNG, L. CRANMER—The Vision of Asia (E. R. Hughes)	186
CARRITT, E. F.—Ethical and Political Thinking (A. Macbeath)	162
CHWISTEK, LEON (the late)—The Limits of Science (William Kneale)	283
CLEOBURY, F. H.—God, Man and the Absolute (R. Nicol Cross)	181
COPLESTON, F. C.—Arthur Schopenhauer (T. Corbishley)	373
CORNFORTH, MAURICE—Science versus Idealism (Winston H. F. Barnes)	280
DINGLE, H.—The Missing Factor in Science (W. B. Gallie)	364
EWING, A. C.—The Individual, the State and World Government (R. C. Cross)	279
FAIRLEY, BARKER—A Study of Goethe (W. B. Gallie)	275
FALES, WALTER—Wisdom and Responsibility (I. M. Hubbard)	68
Hobbes, Thomas.—Leviathan. Edited with Introduction by Michael Oakeshott (K. C. Wheare)	176
HOCKING, W. E. (and others).—Preface to Philosophy: Textbook (P. F. Strawson)	378
HORKHEIMER, MAX.—Eclipse of Reason (J. D. Mabbott)	368
JOHNSON, A. BRYAN—A Treatise on Language (D. J. O'Connor)	375
KIERKEGAARD, S.—Works of Love (Dorothy M. Emmet)	87
LEWIS, H. D.—Morals and the New Theology (J. Hartland-Swann)	166

	PAGE
LITTLE, A.— <i>The Nature of Art</i> (E. F. Carritt)	179
Locke, John.— <i>The Second Treatise on Civil Government and a Letter concerning Toleration</i> , Edited with Introduction by J. W. Gough (J. W. Harvey)	178
MALINOWSKI, B.— <i>Freedom and Civilisation</i> (A. Macbeath)	367
PATON, H. J.— <i>The Categorical Imperative: A Study in Kant's Moral Philosophy</i> (A. C. Ewing)	172
PEPPER, S. C.— <i>The Basis of Criticism in the Arts</i> (L. A. Reid)	84
PERRY, RALPH BARTON.— <i>Puritanism and Democracy</i> (Michael Oakeshott)	86
RAPHAEL, D. DAICHES.— <i>The Moral Sense</i> (P. F. Strawson)	168
ROSS, SIR W. D.— <i>Alfred Edward Taylor (1869-1945)</i> (T. M. Knox)	374
RUSSELL, BERTRAND.— <i>Philosophy and Politics</i> (W. D. Handcock)	270
SAMUEL, VISCOUNT.— <i>Creative Man</i> (Romanes Lecture 1947) (H. D. Lewis)	83
SARTRE, JEAN-PAUL.— <i>Existentialism</i> (F. C. Copleston)	365
SCHNEIDER, HERBERT W.— <i>A History of American Philosophy</i> (P. H. Heine mann)	376
SCHOLEM, GERSHOM G.— <i>Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism</i> (W. R. Inge)	188
SCIACCA, M. F.— <i>Giornale di Metafisica</i> (July-Sept. 1947) (T. E. Jessop)	277
SHORE, MAURICE J.— <i>Soviet Education</i> (J. R. Jones)	371
SMITH, NORMAN KEMP.— <i>The Philosophy of David Hume</i> (T. E. Jessop)	264
ULLMANN, WALTER.— <i>The Medieval Idea of Law as Represented by Lucas de Penna</i> (Eric Kemp)	183
VISCHER, A. L.— <i>Old Age: Its Compensations and Rewards</i> (E. M. Rowell)	184
WENSINCK, A. J.— <i>La Pensée de Ghazālī</i> (I. C. Copleston)	186
WHITEHEAD, A. N.— <i>Essays in Science and Philosophy</i> (S. T. Hooper)	89
WHITTAKER, SIR EDMUND.— <i>Space and Spirit</i> (M. Johnson)	161
WIEMAN, H. N.— <i>The Source of Human Good</i> (L. A. Reid)	379
WISDOM, J. O.— <i>Causation and the Foundations of Science</i> (A. C. Ewing)	171
WOLFSON, HARRY AUSTRYN.— <i>Philosophical Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity and Islam</i> (Claude Jenkins)	272

#### OBITUARY NOTICES

ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD	287
------------------------	-----

#### INSTITUTE NOTICES

"ASSOCIATES"	95, 382
LECTURES AT THE INSTITUTE	95, 384
RAISING OF THE SUBSCRIPTION	191
XTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHILOSOPHY	191

#### CORRESPONDENCE

WODERHOUSE, HELEN	383
-------------------	-----

#### MISCELLANEOUS

PERROTT STUDENTSHIP IN PSYCHICAL RESEARCH	56
---	----

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## LOGICAL NECESSITY

experimental results which would justify this interpretation; in this case the shape of the instrument has suggested the possibility of its use.

The mathematician's function<sup>1</sup> is to find the smallest number of basic axioms which provide the greatest number of useful statements of logically necessary connections between propositions; a statement of a logically necessary connection is useful in so far as it can be appropriately (in the sense mentioned) interpreted. More briefly expressed, the mathematician's work is to suggest the smallest number of axioms and definitions which together constitute the necessary and sufficient rules of syntax for a language in which all experimental results can be simply expressed. The scientist's ideal would have been achieved if every general proposition stated in this mathematical language, and experimentally confirmed, could be shown to be a logically necessary consequence of the axioms and definitions of the language; in that ideal case we could say that the form of the language corresponded to the form of facts. [It is important to remember that this is an ideal, not fact. Philosophers sometimes speak as if the form of some actual language corresponds, or even must correspond, to the form of the facts. The truth is that it must correspond *to some degree*, but it never in fact corresponds perfectly.]

The mathematician is free to construct his system of statements of logically necessary connections as he thinks best with these ends in view; that is, he is free to vary his axioms and definitions in such a way as to generate a language of the required form and complexity. But he is not entirely free; he cannot vary all his axioms and definitions simultaneously; for without some constant rules of syntax he cannot make a statement of any kind; without some rules of syntax, all statement or inference would become a meaningless succession of physical marks or sounds. This is no more than a tautology, since the meaning of the symbols in the systems has been defined in terms of the rules which prescribe their use. Mathematicians and logicians in fact proceed by treating the fundamental axioms of logic and mathematics as relatively fixed and inviolable, while reminding themselves that this inviolability is a matter of degree. They say in effect that they could discard this or that fundamental axiom, if they chose, because of course anything *can* be done, provided that the other changes in the system are made which would be necessary to avoid self-contradiction; but no logician or mathematician would ever hope to persuade us to abandon an axiom which governs the use of the language in which much of our knowledge of the world is expressed.

<sup>1</sup> It may not be, probably is not, the mathematician's motive. I suppose that a pure mathematician is ordinarily interested in logical relations for their own sake.

## PHILOSOPHY

It is important to insist on this principle of the *relative* inviolability of the fundamental axioms of logic because its neglect has led to some of the confusions and controversies about logical necessity to which I have referred. One side says: "All statements of logically necessary connections between propositions are derived from axioms and definitions which are arbitrary and can be varied at will." The other side says: "Certainly many of our statements of logically necessary connections are derived from definitions which are arbitrarily chosen for their convenience; and these we may choose to discard when we find them inconvenient in our construction of new languages. But there are some fundamental axioms of logic, the rules of inference which we use in all deductive systems, for instance, or the rules which govern the use of any symbolism representing the general properties of a series, which we *cannot* alter; they represent rules which we *must* use in the construction of any interpretable language. We should therefore recognize two kinds of statements of logically necessary connections between propositions—the arbitrary and alterable which we call "analytic," and the fixed and immutable which we call "synthetic." Given that statements of logically necessary connections are conventionally labelled "*a priori* propositions" (a label which I have avoided because of its misleading associations), these arguments lead to the question: "Are there any synthetic *a priori* propositions and, if so, which are they, and by what process do we come to know them?"

The confusion and controversy begin to disappear when it is shown that both sides are in a sense right and both sides in another sense wrong. It is right to feel uneasiness at the suggestion that there is a definite number of axioms or rules of use which we must accept as the immutable foundation of logic and mathematics; it is equally right to feel uneasiness at the suggestion that we can discard the Law of the Excluded Middle as easily as we can discard a particular formula defining "energy" in mechanics. In fact we recognize, without formulating, a rough scale of statements of necessary connections; at one end of this scale stand the logical rules which govern all our inferences, and at the other end the equations or formulae which have been found useful in constructing a new hypothesis in physical science. Confusion arises when we say "all statements of necessary connections are arbitrary," because this suggests that they are all *equally* arbitrary, which we know by our logical habits to be untrue; confusion also arises when we say "there are two kinds of statements of necessary connections, one of an immutable connection, the other of an arbitrary connection"; for we know from history that the greatest developments in logic and mathematics have had their origin in a modification of one or other of the so-called basic axioms or definitions. Confusion is complete when we try to divide state-

ments of logically necessary connections into two classes, and to ask ourselves whether particular statements fall into one class or the other; we find that we have no means of answering this question, except by comparing the statement under consideration with other similar statements which we regard as either more or less immutable. We have no difficulty in exhibiting and contrasting extreme cases of the relatively immutable and the purely arbitrary; but in respect of the great majority of the statements of logically necessary connections which we use in expressing the rules of our ordinary language, or the rules governing the symbolism of mathematics or science, we cannot make a clear division into two categories or classes. It is wise in this situation not to speak of two kinds or classes of statements of necessary connection, because to speak in this way invites the question in respect of any particular statement, "To which class does this statement belong?" And this question presents a pseudo-problem in logic, a pseudo-problem in the sense that it is a question to which, in many, and probably most cases, it is in principle impossible to provide an answer. And it is one of the functions of the philosopher to recommend uses of language which do not invite questions which cannot (logically) be answered.

I have said that statements of logically necessary connections between propositions may be demonstrable or not demonstrable, and I have made some generalizations about the use of the first category in logic, mathematics and science, and about the method by which their truth is established. But the philosopher's clarification is not achieved by the use of the symbolism and methods of mathematicians; philosophers use the words of our ordinary, or ordinary-sophisticated, languages, with the aid of the small technical vocabulary of logic.

What I have said about the use of statements of logically necessary connections in mathematics and formal logic, and derivatively in scientific theory, cannot therefore directly illustrate the use of such statements in philosophical argument except by comparison and contrast; but the contrast is very useful, because the differences between statements of necessary connections, which are demonstrable within a deductive system, and such statements in our ordinary languages, are usually neglected, or at least under-estimated, in modern logic. Modern philosophy has been dominated by the example of Whitehead and Russell's *Principia Mathematica*, as eighteenth- and nineteenth-century philosophy was dominated by the example of Newton's *Principia*; it is natural that logicians should begin by acting on the assumption that a method so efficient and so clear must be capable of unlimited application. But the "language" of mathematics is totally different in structure from ordinary languages, because it is different in use and purpose.

I have already referred to the clearest illustration of the difference between a formal language, such as the language of mathematics, and an ordinary language—namely, that in a formal language the meaning of the symbols which it contains can be *completely* stated in terms of the axioms and definitions which are the rules of syntax of the system. Inquiries about the meaning of the words and expressions of an ordinary language cannot be completely answered by reference to any explicit definitions or rules of syntax governing their use; we can only satisfy ourselves about the meaning of any expression in an ordinary language by observing and comparing the situations in which this expression is used. It is true that if we are in doubt about the meaning of any expression  $p$ , we may be told that  $p$  means the same as  $q$ , and that whenever  $p$  occurs we may substitute  $q$  and vice versa, which would be an explicit definition. But if we then inquired into the meaning of  $q$  and continued at every stage to call for further definitions, we should reach a point at which we should be told that no further definitions could be given, and that we must study the situations in which the expression was used; we should not, then, as in mathematics, be referred in the last resort to any explicitly formulated basic axioms and definitions, which indirectly govern the use of all the expressions in the system.

We discover the rules governing our use of words in thinking and communicating by reflecting on our actual use; we then try to formulate explicitly the rules which we have in fact been observing. The explicit formulations of these rules of use cannot be proved to be true by reference to any basic axioms or definitions. Those statements or denials of logically necessary connections between propositions, which constitute the arguments and conclusions of philosophers, are formulations of the implicit rules governing our use of words, or of the absence of such rules. They are statements of logical necessity, or its absence, because they are statements of rules or the absence of rules; the words "necessity" and "rule" have the same sense in this context.

We can describe these rules, expressed as statements of logically necessary connections between propositions, as the rules of logical grammar governing our use of language in thinking and communicating; the analogy suggested by the expression "logical grammar" may be useful, because it underlines the fact that, just as we may speak the English language before or without being able to formulate its rules of grammar, so we may think and communicate in *any* language before or without being able to formulate the rules of logical grammar. "Rules of logical grammar" means "rules of syntax applicable in any language"; this is the sense of the word "logical" in this and similar contexts. The analogy also suggests, what is true, that the result of not observing the rules of logical grammar

## LOGICAL NECESSITY

in actual thinking and communicating is thinking and communicating nonsense, exactly as the result of not observing grammatical rules is the production of nonsense. Belief in nonsense is almost as common a form of error, and certainly as harmful in its practical effects, as believing what is not true; and it is often the most difficult kind of error to detect and eradicate. We can say, if we wish, that we can expose grammatical nonsense by reference to the rules of grammar of the language in question; we can equally say, that we expose logical nonsense or contradiction by reference to those statements of logically necessary connections which express the rules of logic. But in both cases we can also say that the nonsense shows the rule, rather than that the rule shows the nonsense; probably this second statement in most cases better represents the facts, at least in respect of logical rules. We begin to look for logical rules when we notice that we, or somebody else, has become involved in thinking or communicating nonsense; we assume that if we are confronted with nonsense or self-contradiction, there must be a true statement (or denial) of a logically necessary connection between propositions, which *shows* that it is nonsense. Most people only become self-conscious and reflective in their use of language when they notice that something has gone wrong in the use of it, just as most people are only interested in the mechanism of their bodies when they feel ill. But by the study of philosophy one might have been made acutely aware of the logical mechanism of language; one is then able to recognize at an early stage the symptoms of approaching nonsense in others, and to point out the abuses of language which are the cause of the disorder and the rules whose application will prevent it. Unfortunately an inculcated self-consciousness about the logical structure of language often produces that type so well known to the teacher of philosophy, the philosophical hypochondriac; he is the philosopher who affects to see possibilities of contradiction in the most rule-abiding usages, and invents elaborate metaphysical cures for paradoxes which are often the imaginary products of his own neuroses.<sup>1</sup>

I have said that we assume that when we are confronted with a sentence which is nonsense or expresses no proposition, although it is linguistically and grammatically correct, there must be a statement (or denial) of a logically necessary connection which *shows* that it is nonsense. According to my argument, this so-called assumption is no more than a tautology; for when we say that an expression, though linguistically and grammatically correct, is nonsense, we mean that it contravenes some implicit rule of use of the terms involved, and a statement of a logically necessary connection between propositions in this context is a statement of an implicit rule of use. I want to

<sup>1</sup> Heidegger and the Existentialists are typical examples.



emphasize the use of the word "show"; by "show" I do not mean "prove." It would be useless to speak of "proving" that a particular sentence (in ordinary, not formal language) was meaningless by reference to a rule of the form " $p$  and not  $q$  is logically impossible"; for if one is asked to show that the statement " $p$  and not  $q$  is logically impossible" is true, one can only exhibit the meaningless expressions which result from thinking and speaking as if it were not true; this is a circular argument, and cannot be described as "proof."

There remains the most difficult of the problems which arise in showing the use of statements of logically necessary connections. A metaphysical reader might agree that statements of logical necessity and logical impossibility are statements of rule; he might agree that this equivalence is tautological, since "necessary," "possible," and "impossible" are in logic only different ways of saying "prescribed by rule," "not contrary to rule," and "contrary to rule." Having made this concession, he might go on to complain that the recognition of this equivalence takes the inquiring mind no further in its effort to understand how or why we believe, or know, certain statements of necessary connection (or their denial) to be true. If he did so complain, he would be entirely right in the substance of what he was saying, and wrong only in nursing a sense of grievance. He would be right, in that in no sense is the notion of rule more "fundamental" or "logically prior" to the notions of necessity or impossibility; in this sense of "explain" the equivalence explains nothing, and "takes one no further." It simply shows a rule about, or states a logically necessary connection between, our use of "logically necessary," "logically impossible" and "logical rule." But I have argued that nothing more helpful *could* be provided; I have tried to show that philosophical explanation could not "take one any further," because "any further" would be nonsense; the complaint of the imaginary metaphysical reader would therefore be unreasonable. But the fact that he does nevertheless complain would show that I had failed to indicate the logical rule, or to state the necessary connection, which would show that no explanation of the kind he is seeking is possible. A logical analysis is shown to be defective if its conclusions (statements or denials of logical connections) allow the asking of questions which are in principle unanswerable. "In principle" here means that any answer must (logically) be meaningless; the conclusions must *show* that any such question is meaningless and cannot be asked.

The imaginary metaphysical reader is not satisfied that we recognize the truth and statements or denials of logically necessary connections simply by reflecting on the rules which in fact govern our standard use of words. He wants to ask "Why are these particular rules necessary?" "Could we, if we chose, use entirely different logical rules?" The answer to the first question is that the statement or

denial of a logically necessary connection can itself be called necessary only as being necessarily connected with another statement or denial of a necessary connection which we are assuming to be true; considered in isolation from other similar statements, it cannot be described as either necessary or impossible, but only as true or false. For illustration, consider the following statement of a logically necessary connection: "the same body cannot occupy two different positions in space at the same time." This is a true statement of a logically necessary connection, if it correctly expresses<sup>1</sup> a rule governing our ordinary use of the expression "the same body" (in any language). But it is meaningless to ask "Is this rule, or statement of necessity, itself necessary?" unless what is meant is "Is this rule, or statement of necessity, necessarily connected with some other rule or statement of necessity?" The answer to the metaphysical inquirer's second question, "Could we change the rules?" is "If you mean by "could we change the rules?" "is it logically possible to change the rules?" the answer is "yes," provided that we change them in such a way that they do not contradict each other. If you do not mean by "could" "is it logically possible?" I do not know what you do mean; or rather I know that you mean nothing and are asking a meaningless question. A statement of a logical necessity is itself necessary only in relation to other statements of logical necessity. If we consider my particular example of a rule governing our use of the word "body," it is clear that we might decide to abandon it if, for instance, it were found inconvenient in the interpretation (in ordinary language) of some new theory of microscopic physics; physicists have already shown themselves prepared to suggest no less radical changes in our logical habits. But we should resist until we were satisfied that the experimental results could not be simply and precisely stated without some such radical derangement of the logical structure of language. The principle of relative inviolability is applied to the logical rules governing our use of ordinary language as well as to the rules governing the case of mathematical symbols. There are some rules of use which we would never consider abandoning, because they are too deeply embedded in the whole structure of our languages, and any change in them would involve a complete derangement of all our logical habits. There are others at the opposite end of the scale which we recognize as convenient in the face of the hitherto known facts of experience, but which we would be prepared to abandon if they proved inconvenient in the simple and precise representation of a new set of facts.

The metaphysician might at this point make his last attack: "Will you admit that the ordinary logical rules which govern our use of

<sup>1</sup> It is bad (logical) grammar to speak of a rule as being true or false. What is true or false is the statement that it is a rule.

## PHILOSOPHY

language are imposed on us by the facts which we experience, and that they are, in this sense of the word, necessary? And, secondly, will you admit that there are a few fundamental logical principles which *must* govern the use of any language, and that therefore the statements of these logical principles are true of *all possible worlds*?" My answer to the first question is that facts impose nothing, the phrase is meaningless. If the metaphysician reflects, he will admit that he has been betrayed into a familiar logical confusion about the use of the word "necessary." The same confusion is shown by the occurrence of the word "must" in the second question; namely the confusion between compulsion and logical necessity. Lastly, the statement that statements of logical principles are true "of all possible worlds" is a badly expressed tautology; it is a tautology because "all possible worlds" simply means "worlds which can be described or conceived in language," and logical principles determine what can be described or conceived in language; we cannot think except in language, and to use language meaningfully is to observe certain logical rules. The logical rules say what worlds are possible, therefore to say that the statement of them is true of all possible worlds adds nothing. But it is a misleading statement because it suggests that statements of logical rules are statements about the world, which by definition they are not.

That we should observe *some* rules in our thoughts and communications about the world is a statement of logical necessity; there can be no symbols without rules governing the use of the sounds, marks or images which are the signs. "Used according to rule" is part of what we mean by "symbol." But that we should use the set of rules, considering them all together, which we do use, cannot itself be a logical necessity; in this sense therefore the fact that we do use a particular set of rules is a fact about the world.

### III

#### PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS

I have tried to show in general how statements of logically necessary connections between propositions are used, and why they are useful. I have myself necessarily been using in this explanation the method which I am explaining, that is, I have been exhibiting some of the logical rules governing the use of such words and expressions, as "logically necessary" "proposition," "language," "demonstrate," "meaningless," and others. The sentences which have expressed my argument have expressed propositions of the form "*p* and not *q* is logically impossible." These propositions will have served their purpose as a philosophical argument if the reader is (a) satisfied

that I have correctly shown how these expressions are used, and therefore what they mean, and is (b) persuaded by this analysis of their meaning that certain philosophical pseudo-questions (the asking of which is certainly not confined to professional philosophers) cannot (logically) be asked, or are meaningless. My argument ought therefore to have been at the same time an explanation and an illustration of logical analysis.

But philosophers are not always engaged in expounding their own method, although such explanations are as necessary to the efficiency of philosophy as is mathematical logic to the efficiency of mathematics. If they are genuine philosophers, they solve problems whose solution is essential to the development of knowledge of the world; their solutions are subject to the test—how far do the solutions of these problems contribute to the advancement of knowledge? If philosophy were not in this sense useful it would be an intellectual game, like chess; and at periods in its history it has in fact become an intellectual game (but usually much inferior intellectually to chess), because philosophers have not applied this criterion of usefulness in selecting and solving logical problems, but have revelled in verbal entanglements for their own sake.

The attention of philosophers has been concentrated on the statement of those logical rules or necessary connections the neglect or misinterpretation of which has *in fact* obstructed the advancement of knowledge of the world. Logical problems are not invented by logicians; they *show themselves* in the occurrence of paradoxes and contradictions, and in the asking of questions which we find that we cannot (logically) answer within our language, but which we cannot immediately show (by the statement of a logical rule) to be meaningless questions. The paradoxes, contradictions and meaningless questions (if they are genuine) suggest themselves or occur in the use of language for its proper purpose of representing the facts of our experience. We *seem* to be unable (logically) to say what, in face of the facts, we want to say, because what we want to say seems to entail (i.e. to be logically necessarily connected with) a contradiction, or to entail the possibility of asking a question which we cannot (logically) answer; such a situation shows that something is wrong in our interpretation of our own use, or, in other words, that a logical problem exists. The philosopher's work in solving the problem is first to reflect on the actual use of the expressions in question, and then to suggest rules for their proper use in statements of logical connection and independence; these statements must clearly show the impossibility of contradiction in the proper use of the words in question, and the meaninglessness of the unanswerable questions. "A rule of proper use" is defined as "the rule which most closely reflects our habitual use and is free from the possibility of contradic-

tion."<sup>1</sup> The statement by a philosopher of the proper use of an expression may sometimes surprise the unreflective layman, who has never stopped to consider the possibilities of contradiction which his logical habits involve; it may show that he has sometimes been capable of thinking and talking nonsense; but if it is a true statement of proper use, it will never (as the definition of "proper" shows) prevent him from saying what he wants to say about the world.

It would be useful to give examples of the use of logical analysis so defined applied to the older and better known problems of philosophy. I will mention only one example—the problem of free-will. The logical problem arises because we want to be able (logically) to make two different kinds of statement, which appear to be contradictory; what we first believe without consideration to be the logical rules governing the expressions involved appear to forbid us to say what we believe to be sometimes true or probably true. We want to say that all events, including our decisions to act, are in principle predictable in the light of knowledge of natural laws; but we also sometimes want to say "I could have acted otherwise." At first sight, or if the use of the words "natural law" and "could" in this context are misunderstood, these two statements about the world, each of which we consider could (logically) be true, seem incompatible. Logical analysis shows, by exhibiting the rules of use of "natural law" and "can" in such contexts, that the two statements can (logically) both be true. In addition to the intrinsic extra-logical interest of this particular problem, with its religious and ethical associations, the paradox has been useful in exposing a common confusion in interpretation of the meaning of (i.e. proper rules of use of) "natural law."

The conclusions of logical analysis are generally statements of distinction (that is, denials of necessary connections) between propositions which by habit have been confused. Some confusions are so gross that they are quickly forgotten, others are so subtle that they impose on the world, including the scientific world, for generations until they are exposed by philosophers of exceptional logical insight like Hume or Russell. Some are created by philosophers themselves as a by-product of their own work. Others—and these are the most important—arise unavoidably from the introduction of new methods of representation in natural science and mathematics; the new methods outrage logical conservatism founded on logical habit, and their convenience and consistency must be explained before the results of new experiment can be understood. If logical prejudice is allowed to prevail, as has sometimes happened in the history of

<sup>1</sup> A contradiction arises when rules conflict; rules conflict when one rule suggests that you may say *p*, another that you cannot say *p*. A third rule is then required to delimit the application of the other two.

## LOGICAL NECESSITY

science, and the new language is dismissed as "impossible," the possibilities of further experiment may be obscured for decades. The work of logical analysis is never finished, because the discovery of new and more precise methods of representation of new facts is never finished; also because new superstitions founded on new logical abuses, or on old abuses in new dress, are constantly appearing.

# LOGICAL POSITIVISM AND THE FUNCTION OF REASON

PROFESSOR BERNARD PHILLIPS

The mob of sophists, however, raise against reason the usual cry of absurdities and contradictions, and though unable to penetrate to its innermost designs, they none the less inveigh against its prescriptions. Yet it is to the beneficent influences exercised by reason that they owe the possibility of their own self-assertiveness. . . .

KANT.

METAPHYSICS as a human enterprise is for ever called upon to vindicate its claim to be entitled "knowledge." Sometimes the challenge is issued in the name of irritated common sense. Sometimes metaphysics is relegated into insignificance by a supercilious estheticism. Sometimes metaphysics is excommunicated for daring to trespass on the holy domain of religion. Here its death sentence is pronounced by an all-embracing scepticism, and there by the confident faith in the universal adequacy and exclusive validity of the methods of science. The attacks on metaphysics throughout the ages have been so numerous and so severe that one would expect the victim to have expired long ago. Yet the inextinguishable will-to-live exhibited by metaphysics has been as remarkable a phenomenon as the perennial tenacity of her would-be executioners. And although the bells have been tolled many times for metaphysics, she is still able to announce with Mark Twain that the rumours of her demise have been slightly exaggerated. In the long run, history seems to reveal a singular indocility with respect to the arguments of the enemies of metaphysics, and as Gilson has pointed out, one of the lessons to be derived from the study of the history of philosophy is that metaphysics always buries its undertakers.

The persistence of the metaphysical urge in the face of countless demonstrations of the futility of metaphysics has always been something of an embarrassing puzzle to those who regard these demonstrations as cogent. How is this widespread imperviousness to rational argument to be explained? Is it the result merely of intellectual perversity or obtuseness? Is it that the human mind has a constitutional bent toward this illegitimate activity which is too ingrained to be extirpated by logic? Does the "metaphysical craving"—as Schopenhauer terms it—result from some prehistoric disarrangement in the ancestral genes, or from some kind of intellectual original sin which the depraved nature of man cannot now overcome by its own efforts? To the evolutionary point of view which holds the human

## LOGICAL POSITIVISM

mind to be solely an instrument of adaptation and sees in mental functions only evolved modes of response to the environment, the very existence of metaphysics is a profound enigma.

That man should exhibit such doggedness in connection with a pursuit utterly unrelated to the struggle for existence is a puzzling circumstance, and it has been interpreted by some as shedding a significant light on his nature and destiny. The perennial quest for metaphysical knowledge implies, it has been said, that the human mind has deep-rooted interests which go beyond the "empirical employment of the understanding," and provides grounds for the expectation that these interests may in some measure at least be satisfied. The need to interpret the universe and to comprehend its meaning is as authentic as the desire to describe the facts and to predict and control the course of events, and accounts for the resistance put up by the intellect when it is offered as its sole assignment the spelling out of the appearances. It is this metaphysical need which generates a kind of restless dissatisfaction with ordinary knowledge and which is given voice in the poet's question:

To gather facts from far and near,  
Upon the mind to hold them clear,  
And, knowing more may yet appear,  
Unto one's latest breath to fear,  
The premature result to draw—  
Is this the object, end, and law,  
And purpose of our being here?

As the deviation of a heavenly body from its calculated orbit implies the existence of another body whose gravitational pull has been overlooked, so, the argument runs, the metaphysical orientation of the human mind implies a corresponding reality by which it is attracted and which it needs to know for the full measure of its intellectual well-being. And, to change the metaphor, if the mind, by its very nature, can no more subsist on an intellectual bill of fare from which metaphysics has been eliminated than the body can thrive on a diet deficient in certain food elements, then it is comprehensible and to be expected that there should exist a metaphysical hunger comparable to the craving for certain kinds of food which have not been present in the diet. It is along some such lines as these that the metaphysical yearning is explained by those philosophies which take seriously the fact of man's metaphysical inquietude, and which attempt in various ways to give expression and direction to the mind's reaching out after another kind of knowledge.

The evaluation of metaphysical knowledge in any philosophical system is bound up with the ways of knowing which it recognizes as valid, and particularly diagnostic of its general outlook is the conception which a philosophy holds of the function of reason. The



problem of the role played by reason in the cognitive enterprise has haunted Western philosophy from the beginning, and twenty-five hundred years of reflection have not wholly cleared up the mystery. The entire history of philosophy could be rewritten from the point of view of the way in which various philosophers have handled the problem of the function of reason, and of the manner in which the other features of their systems have been determined by the prior stand taken with reference to this question. Such stands form a continuous spectrum varying from the one extreme of regarding reason as defining the essence of man, as operating in virtual independence of sense-experience, and as disclosing a realm of ultimate reality not open to the other faculties, to the other extreme of viewing reason as the tool of desire, as contributing no content to knowledge, and as confined in its activity to a tautologous transformation of symbols referring to sense-data. To see the history of philosophy as a perennial battleground between two opposing evaluations of reason is an instructive over-simplification.

Empiricisms in the history of philosophy have all minimized the role of reason in knowledge, and have maintained that in the last analysis it is sensation which supplies all concepts with content. In other terms, they have asserted the sensory character of intuition, and have denied to reason any power of "vision." The function of reason, according to the empiricist philosophies, is limited to re-arranging the data delivered by the senses. Reason can make no material contribution to knowledge, nor is it in a position to state any truths on its own; reason left to itself can only tautologize. As there is no rational intuition, reason is powerless to issue any sort of synthetic *a priori* judgments, and all true propositions must, therefore, be confirmable *a posteriori*. In consequence, there is only one kind of objective knowledge, namely the knowledge of the factual inter-connections of things in space and time. Except for questions concerning the inter-relations of ideas, to wit, questions of mathematics and logic, all meaningful inquiries must be *quaestiones facti*; and except for logico-mathematical propositions which are empty of factual content, all meaningful propositions are descriptive in nature. It follows that, for the consistent empiricist, metaphysics as such can have no distinct subject matter, for it has neither its proper organ of cognition—the only legitimate use of the understanding being its empirical employment—nor does metaphysics have any particular objects to investigate, inasmuch as the whole of "reality," i.e. the totality of actual objects and events in space and time, constitutes the legal hunting-grounds of the sciences. It is in the light of such an analysis that Hume, summarizing the sentiments of all consistent empiricist philosophers, declares that any piece of writing which is not either empirical or logico-mathematical and which yet

## LOGICAL POSITIVISM

pretends to be knowledge should be consigned "to the flames, for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion."

In present-day philosophy, the strictest custodians of the empiricist tradition are to be found in the school which began its existence under the name of the "Vienna Circle" and has since come to be known as "Logical Positivism" or "Logical Empiricism." Logical Positivism attempts to synthesize the basic teachings of the older empiricisms with the insights derived from recent investigations in mathematical logic and the foundations of science. In the formulations of the Logical Positivists the essential features of empiricist doctrine receive a new precision of statement and augmentation in detail. Discourse is divided into *emotive* and *cognitive*. Emotive discourse serves merely to convey or arouse emotion or to stimulate to action, but asserts nothing about any actual state of affairs. Ethics, esthetics, and metaphysics are all, according to the Logical Positivist, examples of the emotive use of language. Cognitive discourse is of two types: the purely formal statements of mathematics and logic which are merely tautologies and say nothing about the nature of things, and empirical statements which are at least in principle capable of satisfying the empirical criterion of meaning. The propositions of mathematics and logic are *a priori* because they are analytic; all other meaningful propositions are *a posteriori* and synthetic. The business of philosophy comes under the heading of *logical analysis* or *logical syntax*.

The philosophers of the non-empiricist persuasion, on the other hand, have characteristically held out for a type or level of knowledge which is other than the mathematical or the empirical, and have charged that empiricism results both from and in an emasculation of the potencies of the human mind. Knowledge, from their point of view, is of several kinds; there are "*degrés du savoir*"—in Maritain's phrase—to which correspond degrees of reality. And so these philosophers, in one way or another, have argued for a realm of meaning which is other than the sensory one, and have consistently repudiated the attempt of the empiricists to construe reality in exclusively sensory terms. They have insisted that the whole reality or being of things is not given in sensation, and that there is a "seeing" which is not of the senses but of reason. Endowed with a power of intuition analogous to the power possessed by the senses, reason has its own distinctive contribution to make to the sum of knowledge and is not merely ancillary to the senses. The work of reason is not confined to the grouping and rearranging of particular sense-data; the function of reason is to grasp the necessary in the particular; its concern is with the valid and the universal. Reason can never rest content with a mere description of the facts, but seeks always to penetrate to their essences and to sit in judgment on the

facts. And while it may be indisputable that from the psycho-genetic point of view "all our knowledge begins with sense-experience," it is equally true that human knowledge is more than the recording of sense-data.

To say this is to say that experience may be confronted with two types of questions, namely, with *quaestiones juris* as well as with *quaestiones facti*, and not merely with the latter type alone as empiricists hold. The claim that the question "*Quid juris?*" is relevant to experience is in the last analysis the distinguishing characteristic of the non-empiricist tradition in the history of philosophy, as the defining trait of empiricism is the counter-claim that to reality, as identical with what is factually presented in sense-experience, only descriptive inquiries are germane. The former claim is intelligible only on the assumption that reality comprehends a dimension other than its factual one, so that in addition to empirical inquiries pertaining to the actual order and connection of things there is also place for inquiries of a different nature in which reason is particularly interested. To equate reality with fact is to leave no toehold for criticism and no room for any but descriptive inquiries, and the Logical Positivists are then entirely within their rights in denying cognitive status to metaphysics, ethics, and esthetics. If reality is synonymous with fact, then since the various areas of fact have already been parcelled out among the sciences, it must follow that the philosophical disciplines are without any proper subject-matter and refer to nothing which is objectively real. The only thing left for philosophy is the analysis of the methodology of the sciences, and thus it is that some positivists have simply defined philosophy as the logic of science. The non-empiricists, however, view reality as containing more than fact, and charge the empiricists with reifying an abstraction in recognizing only the one dimension. Reality is bipolar, say the non-empiricists, and as there is a knowledge proper to the one pole in which reason is subservient to the senses—the knowledge of the sciences which is a report on the actual, so also is there a knowledge bound up with the other dimension of reality which is an evaluation of the actual in the light of the ideal. It is in connection with the latter pole that the human mind reveals interests over and above its interest in describing the facts, and it is in relation to this other pole that reason plays a role beyond that assigned to it by empiricism. Corresponding to the two dimensions of reality, the mind has two sets of interests which we may call descriptive interests and reflective interests. A descriptive inquiry raises the question "*Quid facti?*" A reflective inquiry asks "*Quid juris?*" Philosophy is pre-eminently the field of reflective inquiries, and this is but another way of emphasizing the perennial concern of philosophy with the real as over against the apparent, with values as over against facts, with the

## LOGICAL POSITIVISM

true, the good, and the beautiful. As contrasted with descriptive inquiries, reflective inquiries are concerned with problems of validation, with the valid in thought, in behaviour or in being. Reason in its descriptive capacity marshals the facts without commentary; reason in its reflective capacity strives to transcend the brute givenness of things and seeks the universal, the real, the valid, the necessary.

There is, then, for the non-empiricist philosopher, in addition to the tautologies of mathematics and the descriptive propositions of science another type of cognitive proposition. This is the reflective proposition of philosophy which seeks in some sense to assess the actual in the light of the real. Reflective propositions are cognitive in the sense that they lay claim to knowledge about a dimension of reality, although they are not factual in the sense of simply denoting sense data. Since these propositions intend to assert something about the nature of reality, they must be synthetic propositions, and since they are not founded solely on sense data, they must have an *a priori* character. The recognition of the reflective function of reason is therefore bound up with the recognition of synthetic *a priori* propositions, and the reflective propositions of metaphysics as of the other normative philosophical disciplines can demand a hearing along with the descriptive propositions of the sciences only if the court allows synthetic *a priori* propositions. This is what Kant saw very clearly, and it is to the merit of the Logical Positivists that they have grasped this insight more effectively than perhaps any other school of contemporary philosophy. The three problems of the function of reason, of the status of metaphysics, and of the possibility of synthetic *a priori* knowledge are ultimately one problem.<sup>1</sup>

\* It is for this reason that the great tradition in the history of philosophy has waged a persistent war against the various forms of metaphysical nominalism. Nominalism is the construing of reality as brute fact. It is the denial that the particular manifests any universal nature or essence to which it is pledged to conform. Nominalism thus implies that any standards set up to criticize the individual cannot be other than arbitrary and conventional, for it denies any reflective function to reason and holds that all knowledge comes by way of the senses and is about particular facts. Nominalism sees in universals only arbitrary names which may be teleologically convenient, but which do not represent necessities in the nature of things. It regards a definition not as an effort to get at the essential nature of a thing, but merely as a resolution to use a conventional symbol in a certain way. As there are no real necessities in things, reason can make no contact with reality, and since reason has no power of rational insight it is limited to its descriptive function and must content itself with rearranging conventional designations. Nominalism, therefore, looks upon reflective inquiries as illegitimate. For if the particular fact alone has reality, then the ideal has no valid claim on the actual, and as a consequence normative or reflective statements have no basis in reality, and descriptive inquiries alone are *a propos*. Hence from the standpoint of the great tradition in the history of philosophy the nominalist is the *advocatus diaboli* if not the devil himself. For only if there are universal

## PHILOSOPHY

Is it possible to reach any decision as between these two contrasting philosophical traditions, or is the philosopher here confronted with an ultimate choice to which logical considerations are not germane? It would probably be safer and certainly more in keeping with the general spirit of the times to hold that the conflict is incapable of resolution on purely rational grounds and that any decision in the matter involves an ultimate orientation on the part of the individual philosopher which reflects his total personality and temperament. Indeed, when one considers that the argument between empiricists and non-empiricists has in one form or another been coeval with the history of philosophy itself, it seems presumptuous to hope to settle the matter at this late date in favour of one contestant or the other. Nevertheless, I shall venture the thesis that empiricism is a position which is not ultimately self-supporting, and that so far as it appears to stand up it rests not entirely on its own premises, but relies like stage scenery on other props which are not immediately visible to the audience. When the issue between empiricist and non-empiricist is formulated in terms of the status and presuppositions of reflective inquiries, empiricism stands revealed as a self-refuting philosophy, for it then becomes manifest that empiricism as a doctrine is itself the result of a reflective investigation—though it does not openly recognize the existence of reflective inquiries—and that as such it is inescapably committed to a metaphysical position—though it avows the meaninglessness of metaphysical discourse. It is only the fact that empiricism is not a sufficiently self-conscious philosophy which allows it to exempt itself from the principles which it lays down for other philosophies and which makes it possible for it to violate with an easy conscience the Golden Rule of philosophy: Grant unto others what you presuppose for yourself. In particular, Logical Positivism, as a contemporary representative of the empiricist tradition, appears to be merely another instance of the perennial effort to hunt with the hounds while running with the hare. Its failure to recognize itself as such must be ascribed to its unwillingness to confront this fatal dilemma: *Logical Positivism must concede the existence of reflective inquiries if it is to claim any significance for its fundamental assertions; it cannot admit the legitimacy of reflective inquiries and remain Logical Positivism.* Once this dilemma is honestly faced and thought through, it becomes evident that the basic assertions of the Logical Positivist are advanced as synthetic *a priori* propositions, that at least some of his

natures in addition to particular things, only if there are ideals which form part of the grain of reality, and only if the human cognitive faculty has the capacity for apprehending what is not evident to the senses, in short only if reason has the power of "seeing" the necessary in the particular, can reflective inquiries be admitted as genuine.

## LOGICAL POSITIVISM

definitions are intended as *real* definitions and are more than conventional resolutions regarding the use of marks, and that the activity he carries on and by virtue of which he arrives at his conclusions is fundamentally neither the mathematico-deductive one nor the empirical one, but is of the nature of a reflective inquiry. For though he claims for his conclusions both objective reference and necessity, yet he must agree that these conclusions are neither empirical statements nor tautologies. They must, therefore, be reflective statements, for these alone claim objective reference without being empirical.

In what way, for example, are we to interpret the famous empirical criterion of meaning which constitutes one of the basic theses of Logical Positivism? What is its status among propositions? What kind of knowledge claim does it make for itself? It surely does not intend to be merely descriptive of the psychology of the Logical Positivist, for as a report on the manner in which his own mind customarily functions it would not define a philosophical position and would have no valid claim on the attention of philosophers. Nor will it do to interpret the principle as constituting a report on the *de facto* state of current linguistic usage, for as such it would permit no deductions with regard to the intrinsic possibility or impossibility of metaphysical discourse. If the criterion has any content at all, if it does assert some real state of affairs, then it cannot be a tautology; and since it is not itself a confirmable empirical statement, it must perforce be interpreted as a reflective proposition based on rational insight. What the Logical Positivist intends by the empirical criterion of meaning is neither a sociological summary of actual linguistic usage nor a biographical note on the limitations of his own mind, but a philosophical theory of the real essence of language as such. And if he has indeed apprehended the true nature of language, then he may legitimately proceed to rule on the kinds of discourse which are permissible, and philosophers are bound to heed his words.

But this interpretation of the empirical criterion of meaning—the only interpretation which grants it any philosophical significance—implies that it is a *real* and not a nominal definition of language. As a real definition, the criterion would have a cutting edge, and with it the Logical Positivism could then proceed to hack down the metaphysical dragon. A knowledge of the real essence of language would allow what no sociology or psychology of language could achieve, namely, a deduction of the impossibility of metaphysics in principle. And this puts the Logical Positivist in a most embarrassing predicament: his basic criterion has philosophical significance only if it is taken as a real definition; to regard it as such is to abandon empiricism which cannot tolerate such definitions.

It has become fashionable, as positivists have gained sophistica-

tion from the criticisms of their opponents, to reinterpret the empirical criterion of meaning as a proposal or recommendation that philosophers limit themselves to propositions susceptible of empirical confirmation. In this way, the Logical Positivists hope to be freed from the embarrassing necessity of having to interpret the criterion as either an analytic tautology or as an empirical statement of fact, or as a reflective statement of the essential nature of language. The issuing of recommendations is, of course, the prerogative of any philosopher, but the only difficulty here is that a proposal provides no basis for deciding questions of fact. Whether metaphysical discourse is or is not legitimate cannot be settled by any conventions regarding the manner in which philosophers are henceforth to conduct themselves. The metaphysician cannot be compelled to heed the proposal, for it is a perfectly arbitrary one according to the positivist's own presuppositions. There is no conceivable way in which the proposal could be validated and rescued from arbitrariness, for the positivist will allow only descriptive inquiries, and his proposal thus amounts to the propounding of a nominal definition of "meaning." As regards nominal definitions, the situation is that of Israel under the judges—each man doeth that which is right in his own heart. The attempt to issue nominal definitions which shall be binding is the attempt to create philosophy by fiat.<sup>1</sup>

A similar situation prevails in connection with the term "cognitive." Logical Positivism makes an emphatic distinction between "cognitive" and "emotive" discourse, and is wont to consign metaphysical and moral judgments to the realm of "emotive" discourse. The degree "cognitive" is conferred upon all candidates which successfully fulfill the requirements of the empirical criterion of meaning. But the precise meaning of the term "cognitive" is nowhere clarified. Does it possess an antecedent meaning of its own, or is its entire content given it by the equation: cognitive statements = statements fulfilling the empirical criterion of meaning? If the latter is the case, then the assertion that metaphysical or moral judgments are non-cognitive because they do not fulfill the empirical criterion of meaning will produce no great alarm among metaphysicians and moralists, for it is then simply the harmless tautology that metaphysical and moral propositions do not fulfill the empirical criterion of meaning because they do not fulfill the empirical criterion of meaning. On the other hand, if the term "cognitive" does have some antecedent meaning of

<sup>1</sup> The feeble attempt is sometimes made to justify the proposal on the grounds of its practicality, namely on the grounds that use of the empirical criterion has yielded results in science. But only the employment of antecedent standards of value, all of which according to the positivist are arbitrary, will enable one to decide which results are "results," for every mode of activity has results of some kind.

its own, then the equation of "cognitive" with "fulfilling the empirical criterion of meaning" is a synthetic proposition, and one would like to know how it could possibly be validated. Is it an *a posteriori* judgment? What experience could possibly substantiate it? Does the equation represent a synthetic *a priori* judgment based on a rational intuition? But there can be no such judgments according to the positivist.

The difficulty in which the Logical Positivist is involved at this point results again from the fact that while on the one hand he denies the existence of real definitions, on the other hand he presents a definition which is significant only on the assumption that it is not merely a nominal one. So long as "cognitive" is merely a convenient abbreviation for the longer expression "fulfilling the empirical criterion of meaning," the anti-metaphysical thesis is merely the tautology that metaphysical statements do not fulfill the empirical criterion of meaning because they do not fulfill the empirical criterion of meaning. The positivist would like to be able to say "This is what 'cognitive' really does mean," but his nominalistic premises preclude such utterances. In ordinary discourse, the term "cognitive" signifies "having reference to and disclosing the character of reality," and if reality is in truth wholly sensory in character, then all significant propositions must be descriptive of sense-data, and the positivist would be fully within his rights in refusing cognitive status to the propositions of ethics and metaphysics. But what are the grounds for affirming the exclusively sensory character of reality? Only an insight into the nature of reality could provide the basis for deciding the matter. In other words, it is only metaphysics (i.e. the knowledge of the nature of ultimate reality) which can furnish the standpoint from which one may determine which propositions are cognitive—that is, which propositions do in fact refer to reality. That reality is wholly sensory in character, and that, therefore, cognitive propositions must fulfill the empirical criterion of meaning, involves a metaphysical thesis which cannot possibly be demonstrated via any analysis of language. The erroneous notion that a theory of the limits of language can be erected independently of any metaphysical assumptions and solely by some process of "logical analysis" is the fundamental illusion which underlies the whole linguistic approach to philosophy which has mislead so many philosophers in recent years. A perfect example of this illusion is provided by the title of one of Carnap's articles, "Ueberwindung der Metaphysik durch logische Analyse der Sprache."<sup>1</sup> The title obviously carries the implication that the analysis of language provides a neutral vantage-point outside all metaphysical systems from which their nonsensical character becomes apparent, but the article itself clearly reveals that the lin-

<sup>1</sup> *Erkenntnis*, Vol. II, p. 219.



guistic analysis is but a metaphysics in disguise. It is nominalism which is concealed under the sheep's clothing, and Carnap's thesis in the end amounts to little more than the dogmatic assertion that since metaphysical nominalism is true, all other metaphysical systems must be repudiated. Logical Positivism is not merely a theory of language—as it claims to be; it is simultaneously a metaphysic.<sup>1</sup> And empiricism in general is not merely the delimitation of knowledge to the description of the sensory; it is also the confining of reality within the limits of the sensory. The vaunted analysis of language provides no refutation of metaphysics; it merely sets up without argument one particular type of metaphysics.

"Logical analysis" is the rubric under which the positivist seeks to define the entire scope of legitimate philosophical activity. The term obviously occupies a place of fundamental importance in his scheme, for it is supposed to denote the kind of activity in which he conceives himself to be engaged. His own assertions involve some sort of knowledge claim which is neither of the scientific nor of the mathematical kind. The proposition that science and mathematics are the whole of knowledge is itself advanced as a piece of knowledge, and yet it is neither science nor mathematics. What, then, is it? There seems to be an inescapable contradiction between the explicit assertion that science and mathematics exhaust the field of genuine knowledge and the claim that Logical Positivism as a system of propositions is also significant. Wittgenstein conceded the contradiction and viewed his own writing as nonsense—though important nonsense. But most Logical Positivists have not been able to rest comfortably in such a paradox, and have sought other ways of meeting the difficulty.

Carnap endeavours to evade the paradox by means of a proposed distinction between "object sentences" and "logical sentences." The latter, he holds,

do not refer directly to the objects, but to sentences, terms, theories, and so on, which themselves refer to objects.<sup>2</sup> . . . Philosophy is to be replaced by the logic of science—that is to say, by the logical analysis of the concepts and sentences of the sciences, for *the logic of science is nothing other than the logical syntax of the language of science.*<sup>3</sup> . . . The non-metaphysical logic of science, also takes a different point of view from that of empirical science, not, however, because it assumes any metaphysical transcendency, but because it makes the language forms themselves the objects of a new investigation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The cat is let out of the bag in the following statement: "The term 'real' is employed in a clear sense and usually with good reason in daily life and science to designate that which is located in space-time and is a link in the chains of causal relations." Cf. Feigl, H., "Logical Empiricism" in *Twentieth Century Philosophy* (New York, 1943), edited by D. D. Runes, p. 380.

<sup>2</sup> Carnap, R., *Logical Syntax of Language* (London, 1937), p. 277.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xiii.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 331.

## LOGICAL POSITIVISM

Science, in other words, is concerned with the whole field of real objects, whereas the task of philosophy is to study the linguistic statements which make up the body of science. In this fashion, Carnap attempts to assign to philosophy a domain which shall be neither that of the empirical scientist nor that of the mathematician. The statements of philosophy will not be empty of all content as are the tautologies of mathematical logic, nor will they refer to objects which are the exclusive concern of the sciences. Thus driven, on the one hand, by the need of finding a locus outside of mathematics and science for philosophy—and for his own intellectual activity, and, on the other hand, prohibited by his empiricist premises from granting validity to reflective inquiries, Carnap is forced to resort to the expedient of assigning the study of language forms as the sole area of philosophical activity. *Logical analysis is the Logical Positivist's substitute for reflective inquiries.*

In the end, however, this expedient accomplishes nothing whatsoever, for we have only to plunge on through the camouflaging refinements of symbolic technique to discover that Logical Positivism is as defenceless as ever to a frontal attack which fires the question: Are the propositions of logical analysis merely analytic tautologies or are they synthetic judgments? They must needs be one or the other, on the premises of the positivist himself, if they have any cognitive status at all. But in the former case, they would assert no state of affairs and would permit no inferences in regard to the impossibility of metaphysics, and in the latter case they would belong to the empirical sciences. If it is true that mathematics and empirical science are the sole types of cognition, then the proposition of logical analysis can make no addition to the sum of human knowledge, and the Logical Positivist remains in the embarrassing predicament of being unable to give significance to his own remarks. Carnap's proposal that philosophy make the "language forms themselves the object of a new investigation" leaves altogether unspecified the kind of evidence which would be germane to this "new investigation." So long as reflective inquiries are not admitted as genuine, there is no possibility of distinguishing in principle between the "new investigations" and the disciplines which are already concerned with the actual functioning of language, viz. philology, comparative linguistics, the psychology of language, etc. These sciences in their totality address themselves to the empirical characteristics of language, and from the standpoint of a strict empiricism they say about language everything that can be said. What further aspects of language are there to constitute the area of logical analysis, and by what significant but non-empirical method does the positivist pretend to say about language what has been left unsaid by the empirical sciences of language? If descriptive inquiries alone are relevant to

## PHILOSOPHY

experience, then there is no knowledge beyond that of empirical science, and logical analysis must then face the precise dilemma with which Carnap would confront metaphysics. "Metaphysicians," he says,

cannot avoid making their propositions non-verifiable, because if they made them verifiable, the decision about the truth or falsehood of their doctrines would depend upon experience and therefore belong to the region of empirical science.<sup>1</sup>

How is logical analysis in a better way? If the propositions of logical analysis have any verifiable content, then they, too, by parity of reasoning, must belong to the region of empirical science. If they are not empirical, then they assert nothing about reality, and can be safely ignored by philosophers. The difficulty is the same one which has dogged the steps of the positivists all along, and it stems from the denial of the possibility of reflective inquiries. The positivist, in order to present his own position, is forced to make statements which obviously are intended to "say" something, but which on the other hand are very clearly non-empirical, and no squirming refinements of symbolic technique will save him from being impaled on the horns of the dilemma. Either there is a third kind of knowledge—distinct from the mathematical and the empirical—as the non-empiricist philosophers have always maintained, or else logical analysis is an enterprise as illegitimate on empiricist premises as is metaphysics. Logical analysis is not a substitute for reflective inquiries; it is either itself of the nature of a reflective inquiry or else it is nothing at all. The Logical Positivist can give no account of his own activity except by abandoning empiricism.

Philosophy has ever been a problem unto itself, and a recurring philosophical query has been the question: "What is a philosophical query?" The connected problem of the function of reason has created a great divide in the history of philosophy on the one side of which are ranged those who will allow reason to function only in a descriptive capacity, and on the other side those who recognize the reflective function of reason. The undisciplined use of reason has resulted in many a wild flight of speculation, and these in turn have evoked legitimate protest. Empiricism has been the opposition party in the history of philosophy, and it has made valuable contributions in this capacity. But it is one thing to protest against the abuse of a function; it is quite another thing to deny that it has any proper use. More than once in the history of philosophy a perfectly justified protest against an abuse has been erected into a whole system which would deny the use. Have not the Logical Positivists fallen into this ancient error? Could it not be conceded that certain (bad) meta-

<sup>1</sup> Carnap, R., *Philosophy and Logical Syntax* (London, 1933), p. 17.

## LOGICAL POSITIVISM

physical discourse—their examples seem always to be taken from Hegel and Heidegger—is meaningless, without adopting the extreme position that the metaphysical enterprise is in principle without meaning?

What is perfectly clear is that the Logical Positivists have succumbed to a false ideal of clarity, in the name of which they are endeavouring to impose a "new order" on philosophy. The impressive successes of mathematics and physics have mislead them into the attempt to impose the same methods and criteria on all areas of human knowledge without due regard to intrinsic differences of subject-matter. This attempted "Gleichschaltung" is manifestly materialistic in tendency, and the sophistication of technique fails to conceal an underlying philosophical immaturity which needs to be reminded that

... it is the mark of an educated mind to expect that amount of exactness in each kind which the nature of the particular subject admits.<sup>1</sup>

A razor is a useful instrument in some contexts, but a rougher tool is needed for chopping down a tree. Precision is not an absolute value before which everything else must be sacrificed. This is not to say that the philosopher should not aim at the highest degree of clarity and precision possible, nor is it an apology for those philosophers who "start from no discoverable premises; . . . proceed by means of puns, metaphors and ambiguities, and . . . resemble in their literary style glue thickened with sawdust."<sup>2</sup> It is simply to assert with Aristotle that

... although we must also consider how we should express ourselves in each particular case, it is still more important to consider what the facts are.<sup>3</sup>

The first concern of the philosopher is with adequacy to the whole of experience rather than with precision and clarity of expression, and no philosopher is worth his salt who in the light of an antecedently and arbitrarily stipulated ideal of clarity proceeds to define out of existence significant areas of human knowledge. Slavery to method in the end spells philosophical sterility, and positivists would do well to ponder the words of Whitehead:

Obscurantism is the refusal to speculate freely on the limitations of traditional methods. . . . The obscurantists of any generation are in the main the practitioners of the dominant methodology. To-day scientific methods are dominant and scientists are the obscurantists.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Harvard, 1939), trans. by H. Rackham, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Broad, C. D., *Examination of McTaggart's Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1933), Vol. I, p. lii.

<sup>3</sup> Aristotle, *The Metaphysics* (Heinemann, 1933), trans. by Hugh Tredennick, Vol. I, p. 325.

<sup>4</sup> Whitehead, A. N., *The Function of Reason* (Princeton, 1929), p. 34.

## PHILOSOPHY

The over-concern with precision of expression so characteristic of Logical Positivism is partly the result of a mistaken conscientiousness, but this conscientiousness itself is in part at least the result of a rationalization of a lack of real content. Refinement of technique often masks a paucity of ideas, and many philosophers to-day are approaching the position of saying nothing at all but of saying it with an elegant precision. It is no accident that the Logical Positivists have thus far had so little to say about the "problems of men." The preoccupation with linguistic analysis, the elaboration of symbolic techniques, and the constant proliferation of technical vocabularies will not permanently conceal an inner philosophical vacuity. Eventually, as in Andersen's fairy tale, an innocent bystander will be moved to declare that the king is naked. "Semantics" is currently the new shibboleth in philosophy, but sooner or later the linguistic approach to philosophy will be revealed as but another of the perennial attempts to evade the duty of hard metaphysical thinking. "Linguisticism" will then be added to the long list of other "isms" which have unsuccessfully aspired to supersede metaphysics. It is bound to fail for the same reason that all the others have failed, for in relation to them all, metaphysics can say with Emerson's Brahma "When me they fly, I am the wings."

## PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

### GERMAN PHILOSOPHY

The paradox of contemporary German philosophy, its utter eccentricity, together with the fact that Germany is today divided into two or three Germanies belonging to antithetical or even hostile camps, forces the reviewer to consider any German books of interest to English readers whether or not published within the boundaries of the old Germany. How could it be otherwise seeing that whole schools of philosophy and psychology, like Phenomenology, Logical Positivism, *Gestalt* psychology, Psycho-analysis, and even the Philosophy of Existence (with Jaspers' departure for Basle) have left the country, and that some of the most interesting books are published outside Germany?

First of all, there are three books which concentrate on the fundamental changes going on in contemporary science and civilization. The first is by the professor of medicine K. v. Neergaard, *The Task of the Twentieth Century, the Importance of the Biological World-View for the Understanding of the Great Problems of our Time in Science, Ethics, Religion, and Society*.<sup>1</sup> The pages referring to biology are especially interesting. They reveal an anti-positivistic, anti-mechanistic and anti-materialistic attitude, a rejection of the monopoly of physics and a defence of the sovereignty of biology. Deeply impressed by the profound revolution in contemporary physics, especially in quantum mechanics and theory of relativity, the author considers it to be the task of our time (1) to apply the new principles, e.g. Bohr's principle of complementarity, to biology, and to establish the specific character of biological laws; and (2) to apply this new biology to the solution of most of the problems of our time. Neither the general world outlook, a hierarchical Universe, in which the higher levels are irreducible to the lower ones, nor the holism of his *Gestalt* biology, is really original. But there are interesting remarks about a "quantum-biology," about complementarity in biology, about the application of *Gestalt* biology to medicine, and about the harmony and disharmony, teleology and dysteleology, in organic life. The book is important as a symptom of a powerful reaction against the superficial "physicalism" of the Logical Positivists. This reaction, however, goes too far, and is almost romantic in interpreting physics as a part of biology. Moreover, the author is too rash in interpreting and accepting the results of modern physics (e.g. it is certainly not correct to say that the category of causality is eliminated) and in applying these ideas to biology and to the problems of our time. But the discerning reader, who is able to supplement the deficiency in analysis, will find the book stimulating.

Still more romantic is J. Gebser's *Abendländische Wandlung*,<sup>2</sup> which gives a popular account of recent progress in physics, biology and psychology. The author thinks that the new points are: (1) the transformation of the notion of time, (2) the principle of relativity, (3) the substitution of complementarity for dualism, and (4) the notion of discontinuous development. Paradoxically the fact that the author is rather uncritical and does not always master his material, has an unexpected advantage, namely the inclusion of out-of-the-way material, such as Hans Kayser's *Harmonik*. Kayser believes himself to

<sup>1</sup> K. v. Neergaard, *Die Aufgabe des 20. Jahrhunderts*, 3. Aufl., Eugen Rentsch Verlag, Erlench-Zürich, Fr. 6 50.

<sup>2</sup> Verlag Oprecht Zürich/New York, 2. Aufl., 1945.

## PHILOSOPHY

have found the bridge between *Haptik* and *Optik* (H. Friedmann, *Die Welt der Formen*, 1930) or between the worlds of the Tactual and Visual Philosophers (cf. Prof. H. H. Price's paper "Touch and Organic Sensation," *Proc. Ar. Soc.* 1943-44), namely in the sense of hearing; he further claims the discovery of the "harmonic law," i.e. a world-formula combining physics and biology. Gebser's book contains a useful selected bibliography. Bernard Bavink's scientifically reliable standard-work *Ergebnisse und Probleme der Naturwissenschaften*, 7th ed., Lpzg, 1941, does not seem to be available at present, but there is a noteworthy posthumous paper of this author on the importance of the principle of convergence for the epistemology of physics. In opposition to a merely conventionalist or positivistic interpretation of physics he gives interesting examples which illustrate that different kinds of experiments lead to the same result, from which he concludes that there are certain limiting values (*Grenzwerte*) of constants which have a foundation in nature and are not conventional.<sup>1</sup>

Belonging to the same category, but of a very different kind, is Rudolf Kassner's *The Nineteenth Century*,<sup>2</sup> a remarkable *document humain* of our time. Kassner, the friend of Rilke and Hofmannsthal, a distinguished writer, a man of vision, a spiritual *grand seigneur* who has mastered the whole European literary tradition, including that of Russia, has written a book of European importance from a specifically German point of view. Whereas in this country a team of experts is attempting a re-assessment of the Victorian age, here a single person is engaged in a revaluation of the whole Nineteenth Century, and claims it as a specifically German century, where all greatness was *faustisch*, in which the individual prevailed and the will dominated over passion. It is a book of imagination. The author believes in imagination as a metaphysical principle and as the basis of "transfiguration" in art and history. Imagination is his strength and weakness. Kassner is thoroughly at home in the world of imagination, and the reader will enjoy many clever remarks about Shakespeare, Racine, Molière, Goethe, de Quincey, Macaulay, Lawrence of Arabia, Gogol and Dostoevsky. But Kassner neglects politics, economics and sociology. His remarks about the contemporary world of the collective are interesting. The German mind has gone full circle, the *Führer* appears now as the excrement of the collective! The reader will be well advised to concentrate on the last two chapters, otherwise he might be overwhelmed by a stream of truly Viennese rhetoric which adds assertion to assertion without references or proofs. Kassner is phenomenal, a strange mixture of genius and pretentiousness, an aesthete who does not play before God but before the mirror, who gets his visions from his mirror, and who accordingly mirrors our age in a peculiar and queer way.

The *Festschrift* for Fritz Medicus' seventieth birthday, *Natur und Geist* is welcome as the first document of an international intellectual co-operation after the war. It contains a mixed bag of papers. E. v. Aster tries to prove, in opposition to Ernst Cassirer, that Erasmus represents more the "enlightened Middle Ages" than the beginning of the philosophy of religion of the eighteenth century. Julius Ebbinghaus, Marburg, contributes an illuminating paper on the present position of the moral sciences in Germany. He complains that the lack in precision of thought is so pronounced in certain circles that there is no basis left for scientific discussion. Indeed "the destruction of the purely analytic powers of the human mind" represents a most serious phenomenon

<sup>1</sup> *Zeitschrift für Philosophische Forschung*, 11, 1., 1947.

<sup>2</sup> Rudolf Kassner, *Das Neunzehnte Jahrhundert, Ausdruck u. Grösse*, Eugen Rentsch Verlag, Erlench-Zürich, 1942. Fr. 11.50.

<sup>3</sup> *Natur und Geist*, Fritz Medicus zum siebzigsten Geburtstag 23. April 1946, Eugen Rentsch Verlag, Erlench-Zürich, 1946. Fr. 15.

## PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

in contemporary Germany; many members of the "nation of thinkers" have lost the faculty of precise, autonomous and critical thinking. Emile Bréhier's paper *D'une nouvelle orientation de la pensée philosophique en France* points out that Sartre's existentialism is nothing but an accident in France.

The tercentenary of Leibniz has been the occasion for several books. One of them, *Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*,<sup>1</sup> publishes nearly all the lectures delivered at a commemorative meeting in Hamburg; they range from Leibniz to quantum physics, nuclear chemistry, medicine and moral science. Joseph König's contribution "Leibniz's system" is interesting, although a system of Leibniz does not exist, and although his interpretation is more speculative and stimulating than correct. He Hegelianizes Leibniz, by taking Hegel's *übergreifendes Allgemeines* as the key-notion for the interpretation of Leibniz, i.e. the alleged Universal which as species comprises not only itself but also its contrary; e.g. Leibniz's notion of force implies active as well as passive force. This interpretation is by no means convincing, but stresses a somewhat novel point of view. Hermann Aubin adds an interesting paper on Leibniz the politician, who, believing in the unity of Western Christendom, combined a realistic sense of facts with the belief in an all-embracing Divine order. The well-known professor of physics Max v. Laue contributes a paper on Isaac Newton. I found C. F. von Weizsäcker's article on "The principle of continuity in contemporary natural science" especially illuminating. The *Beiträge zur Leibnizforschung*,<sup>2</sup> edited by Dr. Georgi Schischkoff, on the other hand, concentrate on Leibniz. There are papers about the young Leibniz; the principle of sufficient reason; Leibniz and Portugal; Leibniz' influence on Buffon, Maupertuis, Diderot and Rohinet; Toland and Leibniz; Leibniz and contemporary symbolic logic, etc. There is no room for going into the details of the different articles. It can only be to the good that in this time of utter distress the somewhat neglected philosophy of Leibniz offers to German thought a focus for concentration. The English reader will find food for thought in this book. One author presents Leibniz as a rationalist and as the only truly consistent determinist in whose world no room for chance is left; another maintains that from the beginning Leibniz's intention was to beat rationalism with its own weapons.

Dr. Schischkoff is at the same time the editor of a new periodical, *Zeitschrift für Philosophische Forschung*.<sup>3</sup> This periodical makes it abundantly clear that in spite of enormous losses through revolution and war, philosophy and serious philosophical research are still alive in Germany. The following papers may be of interest to readers in this country: a very well-documented paper about Italian research on Ockham, by E. Hochstetter; a paper by L. Müller on Nietzsche and Solovyev; a very clear and concise article on Pascal's theory of science by M. Bense; and a paper by K. Reidemeister on intuition as a basis of knowledge. Besides that there are many others of interest to specialists.

Germany stands today between East and West. Notwithstanding her present political and military impotence her decision for West or East will be of the greatest consequence for the future of Europe and of the world. It cannot be doubted that the orientation of German philosophy is towards the West and that the centre of German philosophical life lies in Western Germany. In these circumstances it seems to be important to keep alive, between the philosophers of the Western hemisphere, the discussion which has continued throughout the centuries and which forms the basis of what we call the history of philosophy.

<sup>1</sup> Hansischer Guldenverlag, Hamburg, 1946.

<sup>2</sup> Gryphius Verlag, Reutlingen, 1947.

<sup>3</sup> *Zeitschrift für Philosophische Forschung*. Herausgegeben von Georgi Schischkoff. Gryphius-Verlag Reutlingen. Bd. I; II, 1., 1946 ff.



## NEW BOOKS

*The Missing Factor in Science. Inaugural Lecture by Herbert Dingle, Professor of History and Philosophy of Science, University College, London.* (London: H. K. Kewis & Co. Ltd. Price, 2s.)

This lecture is worthy of its occasion and of the ideals that led to the foundation of the Department of History and Philosophy of Science at University College, London, twenty-four years ago. It is an arresting challenge to men of science to recognize the need of a "critical school, working within the movement (*sic.* of science) itself and performing the function, or at least one of the functions, which criticism has performed for literature from the earliest times." Professor Dingle does not mince his words on this issue: he describes the present state of science as one of "unselfconscious automatism," and compares its rapid and sure-footed progress to that of the mule in the desert. Without a knowledge of the history of science, he tells us, scientific workers are not educated men, indeed are a disquieting menace to civilization. He sums up this part of his argument with the cryptic statement that the history of science is science. By this I think he means that science is the one human activity in which past successes are not only causally but logically necessary antecedents of contemporary successes; or, in other words, that in science alone do we find a belief in progress which is continuously being justified.

Few philosophers would question the truth and timeliness of this part of Professor Dingle's plea. It might be suggested, however, that he gravely underestimates the contributions made by some of the greatest philosophers to the philosophy of science as he conceives it. Descartes and Leibniz, for instance, seem to me to have done their best work as critics—or perhaps rather as prophets—of science; much the same may be said of Locke and Kant, whilst more recently the writings of such thinkers as Boutroux, Poincaré, and Meyerson are instances of exactly the kind of criticism which Professor Dingle advocates. On the other hand, it must be granted to Professor Dingle that the more influential of recent British "philosophizing scientists" show a painful ignorance of the example and achievements of the thinkers I have just mentioned. Professor Dingle selects Eddington and Bernal for specific criticism. He takes up Eddington's statement that "the cleavage between the scientific and extra-scientific domain of experience is . . . not a cleavage between the concrete and the transcendental, but between the metrical and the non-metrical," and refutes it by instancing Darwin's discovery of the law of natural selection, a law whose discovery and applications involved no measurements whatever. As an argument *ad hominem* this has force. Nevertheless it is worth emphasizing that from the logical standpoint one of the most interesting things about Darwin's theory is that it takes the idea of a species, not as something fixed and logically primary, but as a temporary and local stability *to be explained*. In other words, biology with Darwin passes from being a purely classificatory science into being a science which looks for the causes of certain characteristic changes: and once this phase of inquiry is reached, scientists, in trying to give precision to their causal explanations, will almost invariably try to state them in quantitative or measurable terms. Against Professor Bernal, Professor Dingle writes effectively, but again not quite conclusively. Nothing is easier than to show the inadequacy of accounts of science—

## NEW BOOKS

common to Comtians, Marxists and some Pragmatists—which equate it with "obtaining practical control over nature through understanding it." On the other hand, spokesmen of these schools, for all the crudeness of their expressions, are presumably trying to state in their own way the relation of scientific to "pre-scientific" procedures—one of the tasks which Professor Dingle's "critical school" would certainly undertake.

Professor Dingle ends with a brief account of the Department of which he is now the head. This lecture, so stimulating and well-balanced in outlook, is a good augury for future research, in London in the history and philosophy of science. May the ideal—and the real possibility—of such research spread to other universities in the country, and spread soon!

W. B. GALLIE.

*Existentialism.* By JEAN-PAUL SARTRE. Translated by Bernard Frechtman. (New York: Philosophical Library. 1947. Pp. 92. Price. \$2.75.)

This book is a translation of a lecture delivered by M. Sartre in 1945. *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*, and of the subsequent discussion. It forms an excellent introduction to the philosophy of Sartre. The serious student of Sartre's brand of existentialism will, of course, face up manfully to the formidable task of reading *L'Être et le Néant*, which is not only the most important of Sartre's abstract philosophical works, but is also indispensable for a thorough understanding of his novels and plays; but for a preliminary and succinct statement of what Sartre understands by existentialism the reader can turn to the work under review, which is written in easily intelligible language.

Before discussing the content of the lecture, I should like to make some remarks about the translation. The translator has done well in endeavouring to preserve the flavour of the original, i.e. its flavour as a spoken lecture, and he would seem to have succeeded in his endeavour; but there are a few translations which appear to be inadequate or misleading. For example, it is surely incorrect to translate the initials M.R.P. as "Maquis Resistance Party": they refer, I gather from the context, to the Mouvement Républicain Populaire. Again, M. Sartre did not make Dostoevsky say that, "if God didn't exist, everything would be possible": what he made him say was, "if God didn't exist, everything would be permitted" (*permis*). "Anxiety" does not seem an adequate rendering for *angoisse* (p. 22), which is elsewhere rendered "anguish," while "abandonment" might be a better translation of *délaissement* than "forlornness" (p. 60). "Stinker" is doubtless an excellent word in its way, and it is what one might call a "dictionary rendering" of *salaud*; but although I am not venturesome enough to offer an adequate alternative, I hardly think that "stinkers" conveys the meaning of M. Sartre when he refers to those who refuse to recognize their contingency. He has accustomed us to seeing people of "bourgeois" mentality referred to as *salauds*, and we know more or less what he means; but "stinker" has not yet acquired the same degree of consecration in philosophic English. However, it may yet do so; and in any case it would be frivolous to dispute about such a point at greater length. So "stinkers" let it be.

M. Sartre assumes for the purpose of his lecture that there is no God, that (therefore) there are no objective values, that there is no fixed idea of human nature to be realized, that human life and human history have no given meaning or purpose. Man, however, is free, and what he makes of himself depends on his free choice; he is responsible for his actions, but he is responsible to himself alone. One cannot quarrel, then, with the translator for saying in his introduction that "the chief effort of Sartre in

## PHILOSOPHY

this short work is to face squarely the implications for personal action of a universe without purpose." However, the immediate task which Sartre sets himself in this lecture is to defend existentialism against the charge of being anti-humanistic. First of all, existentialism is not anti-humanistic in the sense of immuring the individual in his private subjectivity: "one discovers in the *cogito* not only himself, but others as well," the other being indispensable to my knowledge about myself. (M. Sartre treats this point at very considerable length in *L'Être et le Néant*.) Secondly, existentialism does not teach capricious or irresponsible choice. There are no *a priori* objective values, it is true; but a man cannot choose without making himself responsible for his choice (which is a choice and creation of values) and without at the same time choosing and legislating (ideally) for all mankind. In choosing and in engaging or involving myself, I create my ethics; but I cannot create an ethics without at the same time legislating (ideally) for all. I am responsible for the choice in its totality, and so for others as well as for myself. My choice is thus not simply capricious or irresponsible. Thirdly, even though there is no theoretical limit to choice, a man chooses in a given objective situation, and he cannot but choose. The young man who came to M. Sartre during the war, in order to be guided in his choice between remaining in France and looking after his mother and, on the other hand, leaving France and attempting to join the Free French, was not limited in his choice by any *a priori* scale of values; but owing to his historical situation he was faced with an actual, limited possibility of choice, and he had to choose one way or the other. In doing so he chose his values and (ideally) legislated for all.

It is not easy to settle the question whether M. Sartre's brand of existentialism makes good its claim to be humanistic, for discussion of this question is profitless unless the disputants are agreed as to the meaning of humanism. As M. Naville observed in the discussion, "at the moment, everybody's a humanist." Sartre explains what "existentialist humanism" is, and obviously if that is accepted as a possible account of humanism, M. Sartre's existentialism is humanistic, since humanism would be, or would include precisely what he teaches. But it is doubtful if a doctrine can be called humanistic in any ordinary sense, when it denies the objective value of man. According to M. Sartre, man, so far as he is definable at all, is definable as freedom. Now, is freedom an objective value or is it not? Clearly, if there are no objective values, freedom is not an objective value. It is the "basis of all values"; but it cannot itself be an *a priori* value. "Value is nothing else but the meaning (of life) which you choose." Freedom, therefore, precedes the creation of value, and so it cannot itself be a value. But if freedom is not a value and if man is definable as freedom, man cannot be a value or have objective value. And does not M. Sartre assert in *L'Être et le Néant* that man is *une passion inutile*? The possession of complete moral autonomy appears, indeed, to give man dignity; but to say that his life has only that meaning which he chooses to give it is to say that it has no objective meaning or value. Objectively speaking, life is an absurdity, and in a purposeless universe man would gain dignity rather by following Albert Camus's philosophy of revolt than by following M. Sartre's doctrine of *engagement*.

But is it so easy to deny consistently the objectivity of all values? "We want freedom for freedom's sake and in every particular circumstance," says M. Sartre. Now I do not make myself free: I am my freedom (as Orestes declares in Sartre's play, *Les Mouches*), my very existence is freedom. But if I will freedom, without having made myself free, it is surely implied that I recognize freedom as a good, as a value, and that this good does not depend on my choice. Again, if I "exist" by pursuing transcendent goals (in Sartre's

use of the phrase), it would seem that I must recognize these goals as having value before I choose them. I choose them because they have value or because I think that they have value: I do not create their value by freely choosing them, unless, of course, my act of choice is purely capricious. If "value is nothing else but the meaning (of life) which you choose," is this choice of a meaning a rational or an irrational act? If it is a rational act, then presumably I choose one meaning rather than another because the one appears to me to possess greater value than the other possesses; whereas if the act of choice is irrational, my choice is irresponsible and capricious, it is not truly a free act.

Existentialism of the type sponsored by M. Sartre may have value as a clear assertion of human freedom and as a counterblast to the worship of the collectivity, of the universal (which obtains in Marxism); just as the existentialism of Kierkegaard was partly a reaction against Hegelian Absolutism, so the Sartrean philosophy can be regarded as being partly a reaction against the tendencies manifest in economic materialism and determinism. But just as Kierkegaard was one-sided, so is Sartre. Moreover, there is about the philosophy of Sartre a certain frivolity of thought, which shows itself in the not inconsiderable assumptions he makes. Nevertheless, existentialism does represent and express the spiritual situation of a section of mankind, and as such it is certainly of interest. But though it has a human interest and though it may provide a salutary counterblast to certain other types of philosophy, it scarcely settles the problem which Camus declares to be the problem of philosophy, the problem whether life is worth living, i.e. whether life and history have or have not a meaning. It may be legitimate to say to those who believe that existence is purposeless "this is how you can give meaning to a life that has no given meaning"; but that does not settle the question whether all existence is actually "gratuitous" or not.

A small point in conclusion. When distinguishing two types of existentialists, Christian and atheist, M. Sartre cites Jaspers and Gabriel Marcel as Catholics. But though Professor Jaspers now accepts, I believe, the existence of God, he is not, and never has been a Catholic. Marcel certainly is a Catholic; but he was pursuing his philosophical way before he was a Christian at all. It was Marcel's consideration of human existence which led him to develop his philosophy in a different direction to that taken by M. Sartre.

F. C. COPLESTON.

*Freedom and Civilisation.* By B. Malinowski. (Allen & Unwin, 1947. Pp. 338. Price 16s.)

This work may at first strike the reader as a little out of date but any such impression would be mistaken. True it was written in the winter of 1941-42 with an immediately practical purpose—to make clear the issues at stake in the war. It was therefore intended for immediate publication, but the author's death before the work was quite ready for the press made this impossible. But the main part of the book which is concerned with the analysis of freedom and the conditions on which the maintenance of the values of civilisation depends is of permanent interest. Indeed the early part of the book where the practical purpose is in the forefront is the least satisfactory. For in his anxiety to bring home to his readers the evils of totalitarianism the author is, as he himself says, "arguing the obvious," emphasising principles which are "not startling or original but badly in need of being reaffirmed"; and he is apt to be diffuse, rhetorical and repetitive. But the development of his main thesis is relatively free from such defects, and no doubt such as there are would have been removed if the author had lived to give the book its final revision.

## PHILOSOPHY

The author's main thesis is that freedom is "one and indivisible"; that it is guaranteed or denied not by the psychological make-up of the individual but by the constitution of a culture as a whole; and that its realisation requires that it should be embodied in concrete institutions.

The most important part of the work seems to me the analysis of the nature of a free institution and the account of the way in which institutions must be related within a culture if the latter is to be the embodiment of freedom. Here the author applies to the contemporary world situation the methods which he developed in his anthropological work and brings out clearly how freedom may be threatened both by the constitution of institutions and by the interrelation of institutions within a culture. In a brief review it is impossible to summarise an argument which ranges freely from the most primitive to the most advanced civilisations or to do justice to a masterly analysis which makes many incidental but valuable suggestions for the improvement of existing institutions even among the most democratic peoples.

The account of the meaning of freedom is less clear and convincing. In his desire to show that freedom is one and indivisible the author is in danger of confusing the issue by failing to distinguish the "freedom of achievement" for which the United Nations were fighting and the freedom of will or choice about which philosophers and moralists have argued. The latter he identifies (perhaps not without some justification in the writings of philosophers) with freedom from all restraints and it is easy for him to show that, so understood, it is incompatible with any ordered social life. Accordingly, while admitting that it is "psychologically grounded in the experience of the individual," he rejects the belief in it as an "error of subjective mysticism" and regards the discussion of it as "an idle philosophic pastime." But freedom of will or of alternative action either is or is not. It is not capable of being more or less like the freedom in which Malinowski is interested. Even if freedom of will is a fact, it is not part of the freedom for which the United Nations were fighting and nothing but confusion can arise from treating it as if it were. The two kinds of freedom are not necessarily inconsistent. Indeed the former may be the presupposition, the necessary though not the sufficient condition, of the latter. Malinowski is, of course, quite right in contending that freedom is not inconsistent with all but only with some forms of restraint, and much of the most important part of the book is concerned with distinguishing the kinds of restraint which are necessary to its realisation from those which are inconsistent with it.

A. MACBEATH.

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*Eclipse of Reason.* By MAX HORKHEIMER, Director of the Institute of Social Research, Columbia University. (New York: Oxford University Press. 1947 Pp. 187. Price \$2.75. [16s.].

This book is mainly a diagnosis of the present state of society in relation to philosophy. The author points out that reason, which the great philosophers of the past held to be capable of dealing with ends and values, has been reduced by pragmatism and positivism following Hume to a concern only with means. Thus the ultimate choices in morality, politics, and religion are now held to be non-rational. Reason became the tool of self-interest. But self-interest, like all human ends, is a mere preference, no better or worse than any other. Value is reduced to power. If irrational nationalism or fascist power-politics oust self-interest in the minds of men, reason must turn to be their servant, too; no moralist can object, for no choice can be condemned as wrong. Moral and political enquiry upon ultimate issues must have recourse

## NEW BOOKS

to Gallup Polls; economic enquiry becomes market research. Thus reason commits suicide.

Simultaneously the status of the individual declines. Man enslaves nature by planning and machinery, and then becomes himself the slave of the planner and the machine. His individual personality, unable to express itself in his work, is driven to find expression in his leisure. But his leisure, too, becomes the prey of commercialized recreation, stamping its mass-impress on his passive mind. Even the few individuals who seem to stand out above the herd wear a mask and have their greatness mass-produced. The dictator expresses mass-revolt; the successful business executive gets on by conforming to his type, hiding his feelings and disowning his values, if he has any; the film star is the creation of her own beauty experts and publicity men. In each of them the ordinary man sees not a personality other than his own, but the personality he would like to have. It is a hero-worship which worships its own magnified reflection, which masks and degrades its heroes.

The great societies of the past—clan, church, nation—were hierarchical and enforced some uniformity. But they admitted an independent realm of truth and value which they claimed to serve; as organizations they had aims beyond their own existence. The new societies—Trade Union, Trust, Communist Party, Planning State—are also hierarchical and demand conformity. But they recognize no independent values and have no ideals. So "efficiency" (but efficiency for no end) is their only standard. Promotion in church or nation depended often enough no doubt on mere ambition and drive, but sometimes also on devotion to the ideals for which the society stood. Thus nation-states did produce power politicians, but also Mazzini and Masaryk. The Roman Catholic Church had a Newman as well as a Manning. But the modern association is run by efficiency men whose skill in production-technique, opinion-control, or man-management is unrelated to any ethical or political end and who, therefore, can be taken on by any cause or interest.

Philosophy has shared in this social decline. It hires itself out to the power system dominant in its society—true to its own doctrine that thought and truth are the mere instruments of non-rational purposes. Or else it retires into its ivory tower and plays chess with its symbols.

Such is the diagnosis. The panaceas which are popular are worthless. To look for salvation to scientists or economists, to technocrats or engineers, to planners or business-men, to pragmatists or positivists, would be to perpetuate our present chaos. For it is just the dissociation of all these saviours from any objective values or any creative use of reason that has brought us where we are. To swing by reaction to some earlier faith, as the fascists or the neo-Thomists advise, is hopeless. An appeal to tradition shows tradition is dead.

In his last chapter Professor Horkheimer sketches the kind of philosophy which he thinks we need. This section is brief and obscure; but it is intended to be no more than a pendant to the main argument.

This argument—analysis, diagnosis, and criticism—is impressive and convincing. It is not easy to read and does not always clearly distinguish the different senses (or uses) of "reason"; and it contains a mixture of philosophy and sociology which is difficult to disentangle. But it is written with great spirit and great seriousness, and it contains many stimulating and striking observations. Much of its generalization is bold yet usually convincing. It should form an excellent basis for a discussion group of able or advanced students.

J. D. MABBOTT.

# PHILOSOPHY

ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY: Supplementary Volume XX. *Logic and Reality*. (London: Harrison & Sons, Ltd. 1946. Pp. 232. 21s. net.)

R. B. BRAITHWAITE. Inaugural Address: *Belief and Action*. (In response to Price's appeal in his Inaugural Address in 1945 that philosophers should become concerned with the intellectual problems of the plain man, Mr. Braithwaite tries to salvage from the logical positivists certain non-verifiable beliefs in which the plain man is interested, e.g. religious, ethical and even metaphysical. Belief involves not only cognitive attitudes but also appropriate action. Non-verifiable beliefs may be such that though neither true nor false they may affect the "springs of action" and change a believer's subsequent action as e.g. after religious conversion. Braithwaite hopes that "By emphasising the pragmatic and behaviouristic element common to all kinds of sincere belief, whether verifiable or unverifiable, I may have made it appear less shameful to hold unverifiable beliefs." But since he does not explain *what* in a non-significant proposition *does* affect the "springs of action," the plain man will not derive much comfort from Mr. Braithwaite's concession.)

G. RYLE, C. LEWY, K. R. POPPER. Symposium: *Why are the Calculuses of Logic and Arithmetic applicable to Reality?* Prof. Ryle confines himself to the application of logic. He distinguishes three senses of "apply": (1) the specification of a general rule, which is an application of it; (2) the drawing of a conclusion from a specification in accordance with the general rule; (3) the sense in which a description fits that which it describes. The confusing of these senses has caused mistakes. Logic has been thought to apply to facts in sense (3) whereas it consists of rules constituting criteria of the correct or incorrect performance of intellectual operations and can be applied only in senses (1) and (2). Procedure-rules, which include those of logic, are of two kinds: Procrustean, which define the type of operation to which they apply and can be formulated independently of those operations and canons of style, strategy, etc., which are not codifiable but exhibited in the skill with which operations are performed. Induction proceeds by canons rather than by strict principles. LEWY observes that principles of logic are not merely "skeletons" specified in particular instances, as Ryle thinks, but propositions, therefore, true or false. The problem of application turns on what facts make them true. Might a different experience require a non-propositional logic, e.g. without a law of contradiction? K. POPPER agrees fundamentally with Ryle in an interesting paper, difficult to summarize, which takes account of the application of arithmetic as well as logic. Principles of inference are useful because they lead from true premisses to true conclusions. When premisses and conclusions are both empirical they apply to facts. But facts are not "raw," but a product of language and reality. New languages may *create* new facts. This somewhat difficult conception is not fully explained. Obviously, the sense in which the fact that St. Paul's Cathedral exists is a product of St. Paul's and the English language is different from that in which the building is a product of stones and the skill of Sir Christopher Wren and its builders.

L. J. RUSSELL, J. D. MABBOTT, A. M. MACBEATH. Symposium: *Is Anthropology relevant to Ethics?* (Prof. Russell questions the assumption of most psychologists that human beings have a fixed nature, and of most ethical philosophers that they have a set of duties independently of a particular social environment. Moral judgments concern social institutions and are meaningless apart from them. He admits that institutions themselves may be judged and a period, like our own, in which many are being challenged may seem one of moral chaos. Mr. MABBOTT thinks Prof. Russell should conclude that an action is right independently of consequences if it supports a good institution, i.e. that utilitarianism is false)

## NEW BOOKS

though intuitionists are wrong to suppose that such duties are known from self-evident maxims. Prof. MACBEATH points out the similarity between the ethical views influenced by anthropology and those of earlier Idealists, Bradley and Bosanquet. The ultimate justification of an institution, however, must be found in some conception of the good life for man.) J. WISDOM, J. L. AUSTIN, A. J. AYER. *Symposium: Other Minds*. (Mr. WISDOM opens with a quotation from Proust to illustrate his favourite riddle "How do we know that other minds exist?" We all sometimes know how another feels but not as we know our own feelings, etc., so we may always be mocked by another's signs of grief, joy, fear. We then conceive as an ideal the knowing others as we know ourselves which we seem forbidden to reach since it is self-contradictory. With his usual skill Mr. WISDOM turns the puzzle this way and that and never without illumination, yet one is left wondering at the end whether he regards it as a huddle which should burst or an insoluble conflict of the human heart (p. 147). Mr. AUSTIN devotes the greater part of a long paper to an acute and thorough examination of some common responses to "How do you know?" He concludes that while we sometimes know that a man is angry, the answer to "How do you know?" is never "By introspecting feelings." Prof. AYER re-capitulates the original problem, somewhat lost in the subtleties of the previous papers, which is not only that of whether we ever know but also whether we have good reason to believe that propositions about the mental states of others are true. If all experience is private we can never know such propositions by analogy. He questions this position, assumed by Mr. WISDOM. "Private" may be used in the sense of (1) privately owned or (2) privacy. If experience is private in sense (1) then the usual conclusion that an experient owns—and knows—only his own experience, follows. But if in sense (2) it does not. For privacy can be invaded and its secrets voluntarily—or involuntarily—revealed. Confession or telepathy might then count as knowledge of another's mental states. And when not revealed we may still assume their existence by analogy with those states of our own which we do not choose to reveal.) D. M. EMMET, C. H. WHITELEY, J. LAIRD. *Symposium: Can Philosophical Theories transcend Experience?* (Miss EMMET denies that they can significantly transcend all possible experience but may include conceptions which though not verifiable immediately, may suggest unsuspected connections between facts which may lead to new discoveries. She illustrates from Leibniz's *The Monadology*. Metaphysical models must, however, not be allowed to degenerate into ideologies. Mr. WHITELEY agrees with Miss Emmet that transcending experience may be permitted to metaphysical models which connect objects of possible experience by analogy. It is not clear, however, how these symposiasts would distinguish such "models" from scientific hypotheses. Prof. LAIRD discusses not whether philosophical theories transcend observation, but the prior question of whether the knower transcends himself in knowing. This seems possible in knowledge of past events. He discusses various objections to this view and concludes past events are sometimes known to have occurred. Then it is obvious that the knower does sometimes know that which he is not experiencing at the time of knowing.)

M. MACDONALD.

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*Soviet Education*. By MAURICE J. SHORE. (New York: Philosophical Library. 1947. Pp. xiii + 346. Price \$7.50.)

This book, which would have been better called "The Marxian Theory of Education" (for only the last three Parts are about Soviet educational methods) is an attempt to meet a need which the author felt, no doubt in common with many others, for a "dispassionate and unprejudiced study" of



## PHILOSOPHY

Marxist educational theory and practice "based on a thorough search and examination of materials and documents pertaining to the question." Judging by the author's evident competence in objective research and documentation, the book hardly does him credit. A combination of vagueness and verbosity, which either means that Dr. Shore really had nothing to say or has somehow failed to say it, pervades the argument, and is particularly evident in the concluding section where the author finally takes leave of documented narrative and submits "a few random notes on some comparative aspects of Soviet and American education." Whether from sheer muddle-headedness or because the author, as I suspect may be the case, finds some difficulty in expressing himself in English (there are such things as "pointing out as to how," "depends on as to who controls," etc.) these concluding pages certainly belie the publishers' claim that the questions raised in the book are "given a penetrating discussion."

As a source-book, however, students of Marxism will, no doubt, find the volume useful. It traces the development of Marxian educational theory and its continuation in Soviet educational theory and practice "from the theoretical Marxism of 1844, through the Paris Commune of 1871, to the present Leninist-Stalinist Program." The first two Parts follow the deviations of the original views on education through the "orthodox" and "revisionist" phases of Marxism; the third Part takes the story up to the Russian pre-revolutionary period, and the historic developments during the Russian revolutionary (Leninist) phase are analysed in the fourth and fifth Parts. In the sixth Part ("From Theory Towards Application") Soviet educational measures in the pre-war years are carefully described, and in the seventh the dynamic transformations of Soviet practice under the test of the "great patriotic war against Fascism." In the eighth Part, the author considers the significance and prospects of the Soviet view of the role of education as the main ideological weapon in the struggle for the "classless society" of the future. He lists as the components of the educational programme proposed for this purpose: "Soviet patriotism, bolshevist vigilance; socialist attitude towards public and personal property; realism to withstand the alien ideology inherited from the psychology of private property-ownership and petty bourgeois moods; socialist humanism, collectivism and comradeship; communist attitude towards labour and social responsibilities; conscious discipline; honesty and truthfulness; strong will; courage and persistence; cultural behaviour, cleanliness, courtesy, compliance and tactfulness. . . . A thoughtful and persistent education on these lines will produce, according to Soviet educators, the new men of the classless society" (p. 247). The argument is documented throughout "from primary sources in the original language." There are over fifty pages of "notes on chapters," an analytic table of contents, a copious bibliography, and a subject index. I repeat that the Marxist is likely to find here a mine of information very much to his liking.

Whether, however, apart from the historical interest, we are to suppose that the educationist has anything to learn from this book depends altogether on what we think of the primary Marxist assumption that education is an instrument of class-rule. It is this assumption which lends plausibility to the revolutionary intention of "changing the school from a weapon of bourgeois class rule into a weapon for the complete destruction of this class-divided society, into a weapon for Communist transformation of society" (p. 220 quoting a Russian source). The utter remoteness of this project from the Western ideal of a liberal education is but a further reflection of the cleavage which divides East from West, and it accounts, incidentally, for the author's failure to achieve even the beginnings of a synthesis in his concluding section.

## NEW BOOKS

Dr. Shore has executed his part of the work with such meticulous attendance to detail that one must infer that he cannot possibly have read the book in proof. He could not otherwise have failed to correct the unpardonable misprints which disfigure some of its pages.

J. R. JONES.

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*Arthur Schopenhauer. Philosopher of Pessimism.* By FREDERICK COPLESTON, S. J. (Burns Oates, 1946. 12s. 6d.)

There are doubtless those who would regard Arthur Schopenhauer as a subject more suited to the investigations of the psychologist than of the metaphysician, but the justification for a philosophical study—as indeed for any History of Philosophy (a field in which Fr. Copleston has already worked with distinguished effect)—is surely that the pattern of reality which the philosopher is trying to reproduce is so many-sided and so complex that even the most bizarre-seeming thinker will have important contributions to make. And Fr. Copleston makes it abundantly clear that, behind all the eccentricities of the high-priest of Pessimism, there is no small amount of valuable and suggestive thinking.

The first chapter of the book, "The Philosophic Situation," in which the author briefly yet competently traces the development of thought from Kant to Hegel is worth more than a mere passing notice. Familiar as the subject-matter is to all students of nineteenth-century Idealism, the very economy of language employed provides a useful sketch-map for wanderers in that metaphysical jungle, with its luxuriant undergrowth. It is particularly valuable as indicating the conditions in which Schopenhauer's thought developed. The combination of Romantic feeling with some personal irritation against Hegel led to a rejection of his optimistic rationalism and the elaboration of a voluntaristic pessimism. The biographical sketch which constitutes the second chapter portrays the stages of the process. The modern psychologist would no doubt like further details of the earliest years of the philosopher's life, and of the relations between him and his mother and sister. Fr. Copleston suggests that the hostility between mother and son was at the root of his later misogyny. Another factor may well have been that his sister was not born until he was himself nine years of age, a fact which might well have led to the feelings of resentment which are, as we know, not at all uncommon when an only child is "supplanted." It might be argued that this sort of discussion is out of place in a philosophical study; but the author is obviously—and rightly—concerned to emphasise the factors which explain the psychology of his subject.

The metaphysical basis of Schopenhauer's general attitude to life is discussed under the heading "Life's A Dream"—a thorough-going development of the Kantian phenomenalism. For Schopenhauer, indeed, the phenomenal is the sole reality; he insisted on the inconsistency which denies to the noumenon any cognoscibility and yet maintains its reality. For the intellectual *Ding an sich* Schopenhauer substitutes Will—a blind, irrational Force, in which he finds the basis for his pessimistic *Weltanschauung*. Is there no escape from this all-devouring urge, which he entitles Will to Life, but which might better be termed Will to Death? A partial escape is provided by the Arts. But it is in Asceticism, oddly enough, that the true escape is discovered.

Of the industry and close study which have gone to the writing of the book there can be no doubt. At times, it is true, there is an impression of haste in the actual style (and Fr. Copleston really must read Fowler on "shall" and "will," "should" and "would" . . .), but as a whole the work is painstaking and scholarly. The chief criticism that suggests itself springs from what can best be described as a nagging attitude to the subject of the study. The author

defends himself from the charge which he anticipated of failing to give a "systematic, coherent and consistent" sketch of the Schopenhauerian philosophy as a whole. It may be true that it is impossible to present a complete picture of what "he was really 'getting at,'" but all too often the unfortunate man is subjected to a series of parenthetical pin-pricks and interjected comments, which not only obscure the general outline of what Schopenhauer was trying to "get at," but also suggest that there is lack of that sympathetic treatment which is called for if a man's thought is to be interpreted with complete impartiality. Doubtless Fr. Copleston felt strongly the urge that besets all readers of Schopenhauer to shake a little sense into him; but one's irritation is not wholly evoked by the maunderings of the original.

At the same time it would be ungracious and misleading to imply that this is anything like the main impression left by the book as a whole. To have laboured so assiduously at the task of reading and seeking to elucidate the tortuous and quasi-mystical language of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, to have charted the Waste Land of the pessimistic system, to have related it all to preceding and subsequent writers is to have earned the gratitude of all who care for the different aspects of human thought and opinion. It would have been interesting to see the writer relate the Schopenhauerian metaphysic to that strange recurrent phenomenon—the Manichaean Dualism. Mani and his followers did indeed admit a principle of Good as well as a principle of Evil. For Schopenhauer, apparently there is but a principle of Evil. But there would seem to be a similar tendency at work in both systems. Probably the explanation is not to be found at the rational level but in the dark world of the Subconscious. Into those realms, as we suggested above, the metaphysician may feel reluctant to enter, since for him the proper subject-matter of investigation is the object of rational thinking.

T. CORBISHLEY.

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*Alfred Edward Taylor, 1869–1945.* By Sir W. D. Ross. (From the Proceedings of the British Academy. London: Cumberlege. 1947. Pp. 26. Price 4s. net.)

Taylor had read everything, and he was all too anxious to tell you everything about what he had read. There is a St. Andrews story of his going with Stout to call on Burnet. When the maid answered the bell, Taylor was talking hard and the callers paid her no attention. She closed the door in their faces and reported to Mrs. Burnet that "it was just twa wee mannies blethering." The story is not improbable; Taylor was not easy to interrupt. De Burgh once told me how he had met Taylor in an Edinburgh hotel: "Taylor had just read the ninety volumes of Voltaire's works, and he talked to me about Voltaire for two whole hours until I left, exhausted, to catch my train." Some personal reminiscences like these lighten Sir David Ross's memoir, most of which is devoted to a survey of Taylor's writings which may perhaps err on the side of generosity.

If a student is interested in the date, or the dramatic date, of a Platonic dialogue, let him consult *Plato, the Man and His Work*; but if he wants help in interpreting the dialogues, instead of a summary he had better look elsewhere. If he wishes to wander in the byways of Greek science or immerse himself in a sea of Pythagorean learning, the *Commentary on the Timaeus* is the book for him; but if he wishes to understand the *Timaeus*, let him read Cornford. If he wants a sample of Taylor's talk, he can turn to *The Faith of a Moralist*, but he will be disappointed if he expects taut and incisive argument in these Gifford Lectures. In the short life of Socrates, however, he will find

## NEW BOOKS

Taylor at his best, and he may wish that publishers had always imposed space restrictions on him.

It is more congenial to return to Taylor the man. Kindlier, more humorous, more puckish than the frontispiece of this memoir makes him out to be, he was specially helpful and encouraging to younger men. His immense learning was at every inquirer's service, although an inquirer about St. Thomas has been known to receive in reply a recitation of the curse from Tristram Shandy. He had high standards and high ideals; his book reviews showed that he expected others to live up to these, but he also imposed them on himself. A deeply religious man, he had a humility which did not always appear in his writings. The author of *Varia Socratica* was a considerable scholar; and no one would deny that he was one of the best read and most learned men of his age; but it is tempting to wonder, as he once permitted himself to wonder about David Hume, to what extent after all he was really a philosopher. T. M. KNOX.

*A Treatise on Language.* By Alexander Bryan Johnson. Edited with a Critical Essay on his Philosophy of Language by David Rynin. (University of California Press; Cambridge University Press. Price 27s. 6d.)

Alexander Bryan Johnson first published this book in New York in 1828 under the title *The Philosophy of Human Knowledge*. Eight years later, he brought out a revised and enlarged edition under the title *A Treatise on Language, or the Relation which Words Bear to Things*. It is this edition which Dr Rynin has edited with a long critical essay.

His essay is by far the most valuable part of the present edition. He gives us, in a little over 100 pages, an outline of Johnson's work, a criticism of it and some supplementary remarks on the philosophy of language while Johnson takes over twice as long to expound a doctrine which has for us nowadays only an historical interest. This is not a criticism of Johnson's work, but we have learned from other writers what we might have learned from him if his work had not "fallen still-born from the press" and been lost to sight for over a hundred years. For this reason, among others, I cannot feel that this book is really worth the talent and care which have gone to produce it.

There is one aspect of Johnson's work which Dr. Rynin does not comment on. In spite of his sub-title ("The Relations which Words Bear to Things") Johnson did not intend his book to deal only with *semantics*. Parts First and Second of the Treatise deal with the relation between language and its referents but Part Third is described by Johnson as discussing the relations which words bear to each other, and Part Fourth treats the *uses* of language by human beings. That is to say, Parts First and Second deal with *semantics*, Part Third with *syntactics* and Part Fourth with *pragmatics*, to use the terms which have been made standard by the pioneer work of Professor Charles W. Morris. But though his programme is, in some respects, an anticipation of Morris' distinctions, Johnson has little interest outside semantics. He has no conception of a formal "logical syntax" or of a pragmatics based on psychology. Moreover, his actual treatment does not correspond at all well with his programme.

His book is a wordy and repetitious elaboration of two theses:

(i) No unit of language is significant unless it can be shown to refer to a distinguishable aspect of experience.

(ii) Though words have no "inherent signification," we are often misled by our familiarity and facility with words into forgetting that they are merely conventional tokens for aspects of experience. And when we are thus misled, we tend to talk nonsense.

This sounds all very familiar. But it turns out that Johnson's empiricism is

## PHILOSOPHY

of so radical and naive a kind that it limits the scope of meaningful discourse in a very startling way. "Experience" means for him *actual* experience, sensory or introspective. Sentences referring to merely possible experiences and sentences about the future are meaningless. Moreover, it becomes impossible on his criterion of meaning, to admit false sentences as meaningful. It may seem, at this date, something of a waste of time to expound and criticise such doctrines seriously. Dr. Rynin makes an excellent job of it, but I cannot help feeling that he would have been more usefully occupied in writing a book of his own on the philosophy of language. To judge from the introductory section of his *Critical Essay*, I am sure that it would have been well worth reading. But I would like to add a comment on what seems to me to be a serious failing in his approach to the subject.

He starts his essay by classifying the ways in which language can be used instead of making this the *conclusion* of an empirical enquiry. Now it may be true that there are just three functions of language and no more, but surely this is, if true, a *fact* to be established in the usual way. It is certainly not axiomatic and it is unhelpful, as well as unjustified, to take it as a postulate. It seems very queer to me that empiricists should use such *a priori* and question-begging methods as if they had inherited the vices of metaphysics without its excitements. For Dr. Rynin is not alone in this attitude. It is a failing he shares with most modern writers on semiotics. Morris and Gardiner are two distinguished exceptions. The first uses a psychological approach and the second is a philologist. It is difficult to see how any theory of signs will be of much value if it is not founded solidly on the facts of psychology and linguistics. And if empiricists ignore the facts, who will take them into account?

D. J. O'CONNOR.

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*A History of American Philosophy.* By HERBERT W. SCHNEIDER. (Columbia University Press, N.Y., 1946. Pp. 646. Price \$4.50.)

*American Philosophic Addresses, 1700-1900.* Edited by JOSEPH L. BLAU. (Columbia University Press, N.Y., 1946. Pp. 762. Price \$6 75.)

These two books, the result of a common enterprise, are indispensable for libraries and for all students of American Philosophy, or rather of American Thought. Professor Schneider's book is not what one would call a history of philosophy in the technical sense, and specialists interested in the philosophical contributions of Whitehead and the New Realists may be disappointed. It is rather a study in American culture, something between *Geistesgeschichte* and *Kulturgeschichte*, philosophy being understood as a living force in the history of American life. Consequently it is of interest to all students of history. It marks, at the same time, an epoch in the history of American philosophy, for it expresses the coming of age of American philosophy and the rise of American philosophical self-consciousness.

The phenomenon itself is most interesting. Is "American" philosophy a fact, or merely a dream? Do these books indicate the rise of a new nationalism with all its limitations and dangers? The truly remarkable fact is that Professor Schneider writes his book in the face of his knowledge that no such thing as an "American" philosophy with a central theme, a dominant note, or a moral lesson exists. "America was," he says, "intellectually colonial long after it gained political independence and has been intellectually provincial long after it ceased being intellectually colonial. We still live on the fringe of European culture." Even to-day the goods imported from Cambridge, Paris, Vienna and Freiburg exercise greater influence than home-grown ideas. The

originality of American thought is rightly seen in the manner of adaptation, revision and variation of general philosophical ideas and standpoints.

In spite of the overstatement, "Our past is fully as confused as our present," the author succeeds conspicuously in ordering the vast material. His hypothesis is that first, in the age of Puritanism and Enlightenment, philosophy existed merely as *λόγος ἐνδιδθετος*, i.e. as the spirit of the arts and sciences without being itself distinguished as a particular article of faith or doctrine; and that only in the beginning of the nineteenth century did it become *λόγος προφορικός*. With the rise of Unitarian Orthodoxy philosophy became a technical discipline in academic curricula, and the influx of Scottish philosophy, especially of Thomas Reid's and Dugald Stewart's books, brought about a new division of philosophy into mental and moral philosophy. When orthodoxy gave way to idealism this "mental philosophy" was broken up into "mental science" or psychology and "philosophy proper," an amalgam of cosmology, metaphysics, and epistemology. And lastly, William James' proposal to make psychology a natural science shook the traditional distinction between natural and moral science and introduced the age of radical empiricism.

This conception and his predilection for philosophy as a living force allows the author to emphasize the little known at the expense of the well known, and to make, together with Dr Blau, many discoveries of neglected persons, tracts, addresses, sermons, etc. One must be most grateful for the enormous amount of useful information, for the 95 pages of bibliography and the 55 pages of index. (A few anomalies occur; important textbooks like G. H. Sabine's *A History of Political Philosophy* or C. I. Lewis' and C. H. Langford's *Symbolic Logic* are not mentioned, whereas minor papers or books of these authors are listed.) Regrettable as it is, there is simply no room here for going into details which are most interesting and entertaining, e.g. Walt Whitman's enthusiasm for Hegel's Political Theory as representing the most thoroughly American points of view, and for Hegel's formulas as an essential and crowning justification of New World democracy in the creative realms of time and space, formulas "which only the vastness, and multiplicity and the vitality of America would seem able to understand"; or the antinomianism of Henry James the Elder (father of William James), who denied "with heart and understanding that man is by creation moral, and cherished with heart and understanding the most revolutionary hopes and aspirations with respect to our existing moralistic regimen."

The last chapter concerning contemporary American philosophy which Professor Schneider declines to write would have been most interesting from the European point of view; and it remains present, in spite of its absence, in the mind of the reader. To a larger degree than is usually recognized America has become not only the refuge of a great percentage of the European intelligentsia, but also the heir to whole schools of thought, like Logical Positivism, Phenomenology, and Gestalt-psychology. It has assembled an undreamed-of mass of material wealth, of natural and economic power, and of intellectual energy, which represents a challenge to the old world and cannot but have far-reaching influence on the future of human civilization. It may be the historic mission of American philosophy precisely *not* to become an *American* philosophy and to add a new nationalism to the old, but on the contrary to overcome the narrow national limitations of the modern era of European philosophy, and to take the leadership in the transition to a world civilization. Without giving up any of their valuable traditions the United States could continue to be an open market and a clearing-house for all possible fruitful ideas and systems of this globe, and might, at the same time, work out the pattern of a new world-society in which the nations (with their different

## PHILOSOPHY

religions, arts, and philosophies) are preserved as cultural units and nevertheless partake in that unending discussion which is the life of the mind.

It has fallen to the Americans to play a leading role in the one world which is emerging (or at least in one of the two worlds). Will the American philosophers accept this challenge? On their response will depend whether or not the rise of American philosophy represents one of the major events in the intellectual history of our era.

F. H. HEINEMANN.

*Preface to Philosophy: Textbook.* By WILLIAM ERNEST HOCKING, BRAND BLANSHARD, CHARLES WILLIAM HENDLL, and JOHN HERMAN RANDALL, JR. (The Macmillan Coy., New York, 1946. Pp. vii + 504. Price 12s. 6d. net.)

This book is divided into five parts, called respectively "What is Man?" "Personal Ethics," "Social and Political Philosophy," "The Meaning of Religion for Man," and "A World-View." Of these the first and the last are contributed by Mr. Hocking, and the remainder by Messrs. Blanshard, Hendel, and Randall, in that order. The Editor says of the book: "Here an attempt is made to promote clear and ordered thought about man and his progress, the individual and the good life, society and its problems, the significance of religion and the nature of reality."

This admirable object, however, seems to have become confused with others, of less intellectual purity. Mr. Hocking's aims, for example, are the relief of "cosmic anxiety," and the stimulation to high endeavour. He pursues them with gusto through close on 200 rhetorical pages, carefully eschewing any approach to rigour in argument or analysis. Mr. Hocking's short way with philosophical questions such as that which he calls the "hugaboo of determinism" may be fairly illustrated by two quotations: "Decision, as we know, is capable of hesitation. . . . A causal process cannot hesitate," "The fact of self-awareness and self-judgment is the tool of freedom" (pp. 70-71). Mr. Hocking's tools are metaphor, personification and the other devices of the rhetorician. His message is that Life has a meaning, that the universe is the expression of a single purpose and that men should co-operate with God. These conclusions are said to follow from an idealist "world-view" adapted from Berkeley.

Mr. Blanshard's essay is the clearest and least pretentious in the book, and the only one which has any merit as an example of philosophical method. I cannot believe that Mr. Blanshard thinks his section on "Ethical Relativism" is a refutation of the views he mentions under this name. But where he is not shocked (or anxious to protect his readers), he writes clearly and pleasantly. He passes in review the main types of ethical theory, showing how each emphasizes some aspect of our ordinary talk about the matter; and finally settles in a position closely similar to that of Moore's *Principia Ethica*. He fails to notice (or to mention) the point that the epistemological objections he raises against an intuitionism of rules apply with equal force to an intuitionism of ends.

Mr. Hendel's section on Social and Political Philosophy is prolix, platitudinous and very dull.

Mr. Randall thinks that "religious beliefs" ought to be taken seriously, but not literally. They are the "symbols of practical attitudes" which they express and sustain. I should have thought that, for most of the people who find them practically efficacious, they are beliefs in a much more ordinary sense. This is a sensible essay, but needlessly long.

The book is well bound, and clearly printed on good paper. I do not think

## NEW BOOKS

the essays of which it is composed are to be recommended as examples of philosophical method. But people who have a taste for uplift will find it satisfying.

P. F. STRAWSON.

*The Source of Human Good.* By HENRY N. WIEMAN. (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. Agent: Cambridge University Press, London, 1946. Pp. vii + 312. Price, 20s. net.)

This is a fascinating and provoking book. It is fascinating because of the richness of its suggestion, its vitality and hospitality to experience, its deep sincerity and religious (albeit unorthodox-religious) feeling. It is provoking because of the somewhat arbitrary use of terms like "truth" or "materialism," and more because of obscurity and unnecessary abstractness of much—but by no means all—of its language. Why do writers think it necessary to say this sort of thing: "Myth . . . is a construction of the imagination, not specifying the structure of events as they truly are but directing the organisms and the social process in service of creativity and the matrix of qualified events relative to feeling-reactions, so that this matrix yields qualities more rich and vivid. This is myth at its best" (1) (p. 181). The basis of Dr. Wieman's metaphysics is (with a difference) what Americans (after Pepper) call "contextualism." His style bears this out with a vengeance, for it is often difficult to grasp clearly any particular proposition, and one has to have faith that somehow, in the end, one will intuit the quality of the whole. All the same, in spite of these irritations, I have found perseverance well worth while, and have ended up with great respect for the writer's powers of rich and varied insight. The book is important and should be read by theologians and philosophers who do not bar metaphysics.

The "Source of Human Good" is, emphatically, not human nature, a "created" thing, but what Dr. Wieman calls the "creative event," or sometimes "creativity" (which more strictly means (p. 299) the structure or form the creative event has). The author, who is Professor of Christian Theology in the University of Chicago, often calls the creative event "God," and the sovereignty of the creative event is indeed the central affirmation of his philosophy. But God is an (or the) event. Nothing more can be known to the human mind, and no explanation can reach deeper, than events and their structures and qualities. "Transcendental" (= transcendent) causes, purposes, beings are meaningless. This philosophy is a "naturalism" (or sometimes) a "materialism," with the difference from traditional materialism that it is "a materialism including what is spiritual" (p. 301) and including, above all, the divine creativity. This (to my mind) strained and twisted use of "naturalism" and "materialism" is symbolic of the author's vehement and sometimes almost fanatical protest against everything transcendent. There is no transcendent God "the same yesterday and to-day and for ever"; if God is the same, that sameness and unity is an abstraction, an abstraction which applies only to the continuous creative event which itself is God. If Dr. Wieman prefers, as he does, the Jewish tradition to the Greek, in that the former asserts that sovereign Good works creatively in history whilst the latter emphasizes the reality of timeless forms, he also rejects utterly that element in the Jewish-Christian tradition which affirms a God beyond history. "No transcendental reality," he tells us (p. 8) "could ever do anything." And he adds, "It could not make the slightest difference in our lives except in the form of some happening, some event."

But, unless the question is begged by defining a "transcendental reality" as something which can't do anything, we can have no grounds (a) for asserting



## PHILOSOPHY

its inactivity in relation to itself or to possible beings *other* than human. And if (b) it is assumed that if some event makes a difference in *our* lives, that couldn't be caused by a "transcendental reality," the question is again begged. Why could it not so be caused? Dr. Wieman, as far as I can see, never produces any real arguments to show that the creative event is not the act of a transcendent creator, but merely asserts this latter idea to be an abstraction or, sometimes, a myth. Perhaps there *are* extreme transcendence views which confuse an abstraction or a myth with a reality, but they are not confuted simply by affirmation of their polar opposite, radical immanentism. The facts present a puzzle which seems to require both factors, and if in affirming transcendence we have to use an abstraction, it does not follow that the abstraction—any more than any other—does not indicate a reality. In the case of human personality, the reality of the continuous event of personal life seems—however difficult the idea may be clearly to grasp, to require some "transcendent" or "pure" ego, and to say this does not imply that such an ego, being "transcendent," is entirely separate, unable to act, to enter into events; indeed, it was postulated to make their explanation less irrational. Equally, can the concrete historical reality of the creative world event be understood without the notion of creator? This is put here in the form of a question and not an answer, and to suggest that Dr. Wieman's answer (p. 298) that it is "creativity" which retains its unity and identity throughout events, will not do. "Creativity" and "creative event" (absolutely good and creative of all good) without "creator" is indeed as airy an abstraction as any. But divine personality is denied. Dr. Wieman discusses at some length (pp. 265 *sq.*) whether God should be called "personal," giving reasons why God is commonly thought so; and he concludes that personality attributed to the divine is a mythical symbol, and that because "a person is always a creature" *therefore* "personality cannot characterize the nature of the creator" (p. 268).

But though in the book I discovered no argued defence of the central and radical denial of all transcendence, his emphasis on immanence, on what we can be vividly aware of within our experience, is important, and Dr. Wieman not only charms the reader with his warm and wide sympathies, but develops the implications of immanent creativity in such original and suggestive ways that one wishes more than ever that he were easier to read. Since the creative event is the supreme reality, morality is conduct guided by general principles fitted to facilitate creative interexchange between people and between the individual and his material environment: the common virtues are explained and enlarged by reference to these principles. And since the creative event is divine, and man a creature, the moral law as ordinarily conceived is servant and not sovereign, receiving its good and its sanction from what can only be known finally through religious insight. As for religion itself, Dr. Wieman rightly holds that while a few experts may achieve erudition about Buddhism, Confucianism, or primitive religions, such knowledge must be comparatively superficial, since a religion is a tradition, an intimate fellowship, a life. The cosmopolitanism fashionable among some intellectuals is pretty deadly, he thinks, and "man must drink deep from the well of his own vitality before he has the strength and insight to receive what others would give him." Since our tradition is Jewish-Christian, it is of this which he writes and (with the reservation already elaborated) does so with constant vivid insight. There is far too much in this book to summarize: Dr. Wieman has to be read, and is very well worth reading. He shows how the values of beauty and truth (in his rather special sense) and knowledge arise in different ways from the selective participation by embodied mind in the creative event. The chapter

## NEW BOOKS

on beauty is good. Americans have much to teach us on philosophical aesthetic, and Dr. Wieman is no exception. So again his understanding of evil and his elaboration of the distinction between evils rooted in the nature of things not caused by man, and those originating in human life, is profound.

I hope I have not given a total impression of damning Dr. Wieman's book with faint praise. The praise is grateful and sincere, though qualified by the criticisms I have made.

LOUIS ARNAUD REID.

Books also received:

- JEAN-PAUL SARTRE. *The Psychology of Imagination* (translated from the French). New York: Philosophical Library. 1948. Pp. 285. 3 dollars 75 cents.
- A. D. RITCHIE *Essays in Philosophy and Other Pieces*. London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1948. Pp. 208. 12s. 6d.
- Hobhouse Memorial Lectures, 1930-1940. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1948. 10s. 6d. net.
- LOUIS J. A. MERCER. *American Humanism and the New Age*. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: The Bruce Publishing Co. 1948. Pp. 227. 4 dollars.
- HUGH MILLER. *An Historical Introduction to Modern Philosophy*. New York: The Macmillan Co. London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd. 1947. Pp. viii + 616. 25s. net.
- D. G. JAMES. *The Romantic Comedy*. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1948. Pp. xii + 275. 18s. net.
- F. M. TYRRELL, M.A. *The Role of Assent in Judgment. A Thomistic Study*. (Dissertation in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree.) Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press. 1948. Pp. 184. No price quoted.
- HENRY V. SATTler, C.S.S.R., M.A. *A Philosophy of Submission. A Thomistic Study in Social Philosophy*. (Dissertation in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree.) Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press. Pp. xii + 212. No price quoted.
- GEORGE W. KEETON and GEORG SCHWARZENBERGER. (Editors, on behalf of the Faculty of Laws of University College, London.) *Jeremy Bentham and the Law*. A Symposium. London: Stevens and Sons, Ltd. 1948. Pp. viii + 266. 20s. net.
- FULTON H. ANDERSON. *The Philosophy of Francis Bacon*. Chicago, Ill.: The University of Chicago Press. 1948. Pp. viii + 312. 4 dollars.
- WARNER ALLEN. *The Happy Issue*. London: Faber & Faber. 1948. Pp. 288. 12s. 6d.
- MARIO Pensa. *Das deutsche Denken*. Erlenbach-Zurich: Eugen Rentsch Verlag. 1948. Pp. 416. (German translation by Walter Meckauer.) Cloth binding: 15 Swiss francs. Linen: 18 Swiss francs.
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- KARL JASPERS. *Der philosophische Glaube*. Munich: R. Piper & Co. Verlag. 1948. Pp. 136. No price quoted.
- KARL JASPERS. *Von der Wahrheit*. Munich: R. Piper & Co. Verlag. 1947. Pp. 1103. No price quoted.
- P. DR. JOSEF STAUDINGER, S.J. *Das Schöne als Weltanschauung, im Lichte der Platonisch-Augustinischen Geisteshaltung*. Vienna: Verlag Herder. 1948. Pp. 336. No price quoted.

## NEW BOOKS

- MAGDALENA AEBI. *Kant's Begründung der "deutschen Philosophie."* Basel, Switzerland: Verlag für Recht und Gesellschaft A.G. 1948. Pp. xx + 107 and 525. Linen binding: 40 Swiss francs.
- MICHEL CARROUGES. *La mystique du surhomme.* Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1948. Pp. 436. No price quoted.
- JEAN HYPPOLITE. *Introduction à la Philosophie de l'Histoire de Hegel.* Paris: Librairie Marcel Rivière et Cie. 1948. Pp. 98. 125 francs.
- FRANÇOIS NUYENS. *L'Evolution de la Psychologie d'Aristote* (traduit du Néerlandais). Préface par Augustin Mansion, Professeur à l'Université de Louvain. Louvain: Editions de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie. Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin. 1948. Pp. xvi + 354. No price quoted.
- Studia Philosophica. Commentarii Societatis Philosophicae Polonorum.* Volumen III 1939-1946. Curantibus: K. Ajdukiewicz, R. Ingardén, K. Twardowski. Editum auxilio Ministerii Instructionis Publicae. Cracow & Posnan, 1948. Pp. 465.
- INGJALD NISSEN. *Moralfilosofi Og Hersketechnik. En studie over George Edward Moore's veridlaere.* Oslo: H. Ascheboug & Co. (W. Nygaard). 1948. Pp. 241. No price quoted.
- LUIGI STEFANINI. *Il Dramma Filosofico della Germania.* Padova: Cedam—Casa Editrice Dott. A. Milani. 1948. Pp. 252. No price quoted.

## CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE EDITOR OF *Philosophy*

SIR,

I agree so heartily with almost all of Professor Macbeath's article in your April issue, and consider his main theses so important, that I am emboldened to ask whether he would consider a change (not affecting these at all so far as I can see) in one of his descriptive phrases.

He shows that we judge what we ought to do, not abstractly, but each of us in the light of a certain plan or policy, an ideal not lodged merely in the future but working day by day. This he describes as the conception of "the good of the self as a whole." While I know that the phrase has a distinguished history, yet I believe that its continued use to indicate the guiding principle or scheme of the good life makes a very real stumbling-block for ordinary readers. There seem to be two objections to it, partly separable. (1) Conduct is so often determined by needs located elsewhere than in the actor's self. The tired mother sits up with the sick child because the child needs it. The same reason no doubt makes it simultaneously part of the good of her self, but it would shock her to be told that the latter conception, and not the child's need directly, was moving her. (2) Our attitude in important concerns is incongruous with the phrase. When the disinterested statesman toils with others over some reform, or the creator or discoverer loses himself in his work, he does not feel as if he were working in a scheme arranged round himself. Rather, he is striving to arrange himself round these things which he serves; to make himself a means and a detail for them. In so far as any man is religious, this will be his attitude at all times.

It is certainly difficult to suggest a phrase which shall avoid these objections and yet indicate some unity in the total life of each individual. Yet even the simple "This is what I really want" fits better, I think, than "the good of my self as a whole." Professor Macbeath himself has an improved variant in one place where he speaks of "the unity of the self's interests" (*italics mine*). Could we perhaps adopt the form "the good espoused by the self as a whole"? I have tried it in each of Professor Macbeath's contexts, and it seems possible.

He writes in another connection, "Moral goodness is not something at which we aim directly. . . . Moral goodness and other goods enter into the good life in different ways. . . . The latter are the ends to which it is directed, the former is realized in the pursuit of them" (pp. 112, 114-15). I should like to invoke a parallel to this. We do sometimes aim at moral goodness, but this is not our typical aim in the course of the good life. We do sometimes think about the good of our self as a whole, as in the reflective moment of youth described on pp. 101-2, but it is much more typical of the mature man to be working within a scheme of goods which he has espoused. These are the ends to which his life is directed. The good of his self is realized in the service which he gives to these.

HELEN WODEHOUSE.

Swansea, April 27, 1948.

## INSTITUTE NOTES

The attention of members is drawn to the Presidential Address which is to be given by Lord Samuel at the Institute of Education, University of London, W.C. 1, on October 20th.

Members will no doubt be especially interested in the programme of lectures for the session 1948-49.

Heads of philosophical departments are reminded that students engaged in a full-time course of study at a university or other place of higher education can, on the recommendation of their professor or tutor, apply for Associateship of the Institute, at the nominal subscription of 8s. 6d. per annum.

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF BISHOP BUTLER'S ETHICS (II). THOMAS H McPHERSON, M.A. . . . .	3
II. ETHICAL INTUITIONISM. P. F. STRAWSON, M.A. . . . .	23
III. MORALITY AND RELIGION. PROFESSOR H. D. LEWIS . . . .	34
IV. A CHALLENGE TO PHILOSOPHERS IN THE ATOMIC AGE. PROFESSOR PAUL ARTHUR SCHILPP . . . . .	56
V. DISCUSSION. MEANING AND NECESSITY. PROFESSOR GILBERT RYLE . . . . .	69
VI. PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY: PHILOSOPHY IN FRANCE . . . .	77
VII. NEW BOOKS . . . . .	82
VIII. CORRESPONDENCE . . . . .	95
IX. INSTITUTE NOTES . . . . .	96

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## NOTICE CONCERNING INTERNATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PHILOSOPHY

THE attention of readers of **PHILOSOPHY** is called to the bibliography issued twice a year by the Institut International de Philosophie and published by J. Vrin, Paris. Each number of the bibliography contains the most complete list it is possible to make of books published in all countries on any subjects *falling under the heading of philosophy during the period of six months to which it relates*. It might therefore be of great use in enabling any philosopher who wishes to research in a particular field to find out what other work has been recently done in that field. This valuable international venture cannot be continued without a large increase in the number of subscribers. Those who wish to subscribe should apply for particulars to M. Prof. Bayer, Institut International de Philosophie, 17 Rue de la Sorbonne, Paris V<sup>e</sup>.

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## THE DEVELOPMENT OF BISHOP BUTLER'S ETHICS

THOMAS H. McPHERSON, M.A.

### PART II

### III

Most critics of Butler's ethics have ignored the text of the *Analogy*, and have confined their attention to the short Dissertation on Virtue which is printed as an appendix to that work. This is a mistake. The Dissertation can only be really understood when it is read in its proper context. Butler tells us that the Dissertation was originally intended to form part of the third chapter of the first part of the *Analogy*. It is indeed an integral part of that chapter, as that chapter is an integral part of the book. The whole work must be considered if we would know Butler's mind at this time.

In seeking to follow Butler's thoughts on ethics as set out in the *Analogy* we are met with fewer inconsistencies than are to be found in the *Sermons*, but a good deal more in the way of obscurity and difficult phrasing. Butler reasons very closely, and gives few concessions to the hasty reader. Also, his cautious mind leads him to qualify his statements lest he commit himself to more than he is prepared to say, with the result that his sentences often contain many dependent clauses which cloud his meaning. But, although there may be passages of a contrary tendency, the view which will be developed here seems to represent the general drift of the *Analogy*.

The main difference between the ethical systems of the *Sermons* and the *Analogy* may be stated very shortly. In the earlier work, Butler held that we come to know right as the result of a process of



careful reasoning; in the later, he holds that we know right immediately—by "intuitions."<sup>1</sup>

This change has come along with the great development in Butler's doctrine of the ignorance of man. To some extent this notion is present in the *Sermons* (notably in a footnote to the Twelfth Sermon, and in the Fifteenth Sermon, which is entitled "Upon the Ignorance of Man"), but in the *Analogy* the idea has grown so much that it might almost be called a second theme of the work. Our concern is with the parts of the *Analogy* that bear particularly upon Butler's ethics, and in these parts his doctrine of the ignorance of man is pivotal. It will be remembered that in the *Sermons* Butler had maintained that our nature is such that we seek to gain our own real interest as this is revealed to us by the principle of reflection. Whatever we see to be for our own real interest, that we do. (This is, of course, provided we *are* following our true natures.)

Now, in the *Analogy* (and, as has been said, there are some few foreshadowings of this doctrine in the *Sermons*), Butler maintains that we are not "competent judges" of what will be upon the whole for our happiness. He is no longer willing to allow that human beings have the ability to apply their reasoning powers to whatever situation they find themselves in, and see what action will best serve their true interests.

It is important to note that Butler, in the *Analogy*, believes as firmly in the ultimate coincidence of virtue and happiness, duty and interest, as he did in the *Sermons*. "If by a sense of interest is meant a practical regard to what is upon the whole our happiness; this is not only coincident with the principle of virtue or moral rectitude, but is a part of the idea itself."<sup>2</sup> The difference between the *Sermons* and the *Analogy* lies in the fact that Butler in the later work no longer believes that men are capable of seeing what is likely to produce their happiness. "Virtue must be the happiness and vice the misery, of every creature; and regularity and order and right cannot but prevail finally in a universe under [God's] government. But we are in no sort judges, what are the necessary means of accomplishing this end."<sup>3</sup>

This notion of the ignorance of man which runs through the *Analogy* accounts for the change in Butler's treatment of conscience in this work. Whereas in the *Sermons* conscience had been a reflecting faculty indistinguishable from cool self-love, in the *Analogy* it becomes "the voice of God within us," to proclaim God's will. We now know right and wrong intuitively (or immediately), and not

<sup>1</sup> "Intuition" is a much misused word. Wherever it appears in this article it is to be taken as meaning simply "immediate knowledge," without any suggestion of what faculty does the knowing, i.e. reason, or a moral sense.

<sup>2</sup> I, 100, footnote.

<sup>3</sup> I, 13.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

after a process of calculation. Butler takes from us the task of seeking our own true happiness, which he sees is too hard for us, and hands it over to God. For Butler, God is a Utilitarian; His ultimate aim is the happiness of all His creatures. Because men are not capable of attaining happiness for themselves (for they are not always able to judge clearly where it lies), God has planted within them a faculty (conscience), which is, as it were, God's vice-regent in every breast. Let a man obey his conscience, for that speaks God's will, and God's will is the happiness of mankind.

The ethics of the *Analogy* is essentially a theological ethics. In the *Sermons* Butler had argued from matters of fact; he had there made an acute analysis of human psychology. But the ethics of the *Analogy* is clearly dependent upon certain theological presuppositions. Butler assumes the existence of God (At least, he says he does; in actual fact, the whole work may be regarded as a moral argument for the existence of God, and the Argument from Design is also implied throughout the work; but these matters do not concern us here.) Granted that God exists, Butler argues from analogy with the known "constitution and course of nature," that His character must be that of Moral Governor of the Universe, and that He governs by means of rewards and punishments.

It is not our present task to examine the theological argument of the *Analogy*. We wish merely to point out that while in the *Sermons* Butler was an ethical psychologist, in the *Analogy* he is an ethical theologian or metaphysician. But it is nevertheless true that he is still following the matter-of-fact method he had used in the *Sermons*. In the Preface to that work he had distinguished two ways of treating the subject of ethics. "One begins from inquiring into the abstract relations of things: the other from a matter of fact, namely, what the particular nature of man is. . . . In the former method the conclusion is expressed thus, that vice is contrary to the nature and reason of things. in the latter, that it is a violation or breaking in upon our own nature."<sup>1</sup> The first method is *a priori*, the second *a posteriori*. Samuel Clarke had followed the *a priori* approach, but although Butler admired Clarke he did not admire his way of doing philosophy. Alexander Pope had satirized this method:

"We nobly take the high Priori Road,  
And reason downward, till we doubt of God."

Butler declares himself for the second way, and follows it admirably in the searching analyses of human behaviour to be found in the *Sermons*. In the *Analogy* he again follows this method. Butler's commonsense mind finds "matters of fact" much more appealing

than abstract<sup>1</sup> metaphysical reasonings. In the *Analogy* he keeps his feet still firmly planted on the ground. He begins always from matters of human experience and argues from them to the unseen world, never vice versa. So when we say that the ethics Butler develops in the *Analogy* is a theological ethics we do not mean that it is completely abstract and metaphysical. However, there is an abstract element in it. In the passage quoted below, where Butler attempts to demonstrate that we have the special faculty called conscience, he argues only from matters of experience, and this is true of nearly all his arguments in the *Analogy*; but none the less there is assumed as a basis for his ethics the abstract theological proposition: There is a God Who is the Moral Governor of the Universe and Who governs by the method of reward and punishment. This proposition is itself established<sup>2</sup> by argument from matters of fact; but, however arrived at, it obviously remains, and will always remain, an abstract theological proposition—it can never become a matter of experience in the sense in which Butler's original data are called matters of experience. This proposition lies behind Butler's ethical theory and is an essential presupposition of it; to anyone who could not accept that proposition, the ethical theory would be unacceptable. In this, the *Analogy* may be contrasted with the *Sermons*.

The ethical theory of the *Analogy* may be briefly stated thus: We have not the ability to know what will be for our own good; our powers of reasoning are not strong enough, or are not of the right sort. God, who seeks the happiness of all His creatures, prescribes our duty for us. If we follow this, we shall attain happiness. God speaks through our consciences. We know the deliverances of conscience intuitively.

This would seem to make right mean merely what God commands. But Butler believes that right is objective and absolute. Right exists, or subsists, apart from God's will. God commands only what is absolutely right in itself.

It is obviously time to examine in detail the nature of Butler's new conception of conscience. In the *Dissertation on Virtue* he discusses conscience at length. First, he tries to show that we do possess it.

"That we have this moral approving and disapproving faculty, is certain from our experiencing it in ourselves, and recognizing it in each other. It appears from our exercising it unavoidably, in the approbation and disapprobation even of feigned characters: from

<sup>1</sup> "Abstract" in the sense of "not empirical," or "not verifiable by sense-experience"; I do not mean by it "necessary" or "self-evident."

<sup>2</sup> Or, better, shown to be highly probable. Butler does not think it can be demonstrated conclusively. "Probability is the guide of life."

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

the words, *right* and *wrong*, *odious* and *amiable*, *base* and *worthy*, with many others of like signification in all languages, applied to actions and characters: from the many written systems of morals which suppose it; since it cannot be imagined, that all these authors, throughout all these treatises, had absolutely no meaning at all to their words, or a meaning merely chimerical: from our natural sense of gratitude, which implies a distinction between merely being the instrument of good, and intending it: from the like distinction, every one makes, between injury and mere harm, which, Hohhes says, is peculiar to mankind; and between injury and just punishment, a distinction plainly natural, prior to the consideration of human laws. It is manifest great part of common language, and of common behaviour over the world, is formed upon supposition of such a moral faculty; whether called conscience, moral reason, moral sense, or Divine reason; whether considered as a sentiment of the understanding, or as a perception of the heart; or, which seems the truth, as including both."<sup>1</sup>

It is a pity that Butler has nowhere tried to answer the question: What is conscience? The last vague part of the quotation just given is typical of his caution, "or, which seems the truth, as including both." He was not concerned to take sides in the great controversy, Sense *versus* Reason, which, indeed, had not yet truly begun. But there can be no doubt, after a reading of the *Analogy*, that the element of reason or reflection is much less emphasized in his new treatment of conscience. The total effect left upon the reader is that for Butler now, conscience would be more truly described as a perception of the heart than as a sentiment of the understanding. We *feel* what is right, rather than coldly calculate it. (Indeed, Butler does actually use the expression "moral sense.")

But if Butler does not explicitly discuss what conscience *is*, he does tell us what conscience *does*. It approves or disapproves conduct. And he feels that there can be no dispute about the sort of conduct of which this faculty approves or disapproves. Conscience approves virtuous conduct, of which, in spite of appearances to the contrary, "there is in reality an universally acknowledged standard."<sup>2</sup> Virtue is "that which all ages and all countries have made profession of in public: it is that, which every man you meet puts on the show of: it is that, which the primary and fundamental laws of all civil constitutions over the face of the earth make it their business and endeavour to enforce the practice of upon mankind: namely, justice, veracity, and regard to common good."<sup>3</sup> And that of which conscience disapproves is vicious conduct.

The object of the judgments or opinions of conscience is actions, including intentions and habitual dispositions to actions (i.e.

<sup>1</sup> I, 328.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

character). Actual consequences do not concern conscience. "Acting, conduct, behaviour, abstracted from all regard to what is, in fact and event, the consequence of it, is itself the natural object of the moral discernment. . . . Intention of such and such consequences, indeed is always included; for it is part of the action itself: but though the intended good or bad consequences do not follow, we have exactly the same sense of the action as if they did."<sup>1</sup>

Butler goes on to say that "our sense or discernment of actions as morally good or evil, implies in it a sense or discernment of them as of good or ill desert."<sup>2</sup> Some actions are *deserving* of reward, others of punishment, and this affects our judgments about their rightness or wrongness. "The sight of a man in misery raises our compassion towards him; and, if this misery be inflicted on him by another, our indignation against the author of it. But when we are informed, that the sufferer is a villain, and is punished only for his treachery or cruelty; our compassion exceedingly lessens, and in many cases our indignation wholly subsides. Now what produces this effect is the conception of that in the sufferer, which we call ill-desert."<sup>3</sup>

The age and mental state of the agent are of importance in making moral judgments about actions. "For, everyone has a different sense of harm done by an idiot, madman, or child, and by one of mature and common understanding; though the action of both, including the intention, which is part of the action, be the same: as it may be, since idiots and madmen, as well as children, are capable not only of doing mischief, but also of intending it. Now this difference must arise from somewhat discerned in the nature or capacities of one, which renders the action vicious; and the want of which, in the other, renders the same action innocent or less vicious: and this plainly supposes a comparison, whether reflected upon or not, between the action, and capacities of the agent, previous to our determining an action to be vicious."<sup>4</sup>

Butler considers that actions done out of concern for our own interest or happiness (prudent actions) are virtuous, and those done with thoughtless disregard for our own interest and happiness (foolish actions) are vicious. Prudence and folly are not the whole of virtue or vice, but merely two among many kinds of virtue and vice. He offers prudent and foolish actions as no more than examples of the sorts of actions of which conscience approves or disapproves. Here, as always, conscience judges without reference to actual consequences. "The faculty within us, which is the judge of actions, approves of prudent actions, and disapproves imprudent ones; I say prudent and imprudent actions as such, and considered distinctly from the happiness or misery which they occasion."<sup>5</sup>

Butler also considers it worth while to point out that the whole of

<sup>1</sup> I, 329.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> I, 330.

<sup>4</sup> I, 331.

<sup>5</sup> I, 334.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

virtue is not resolvable into benevolence. He makes this clear by an argument very like that which has been used countless times against John Stuart Mill's inconsistent refinement of Bentham's Utilitarianism. Mill tried to hold both that pleasure is the only thing man seeks and that he is capable of recognizing higher and lower forms of pleasure. The criticism of this is, of course, that in that case pleasure cannot be the only thing man seeks; there must be another principle or standard by which he examines different pleasures and sees some to be better than others, and this other principle or standard is thus as much a driving force in our lives as is pleasure. Butler argues in a similar way in the case of benevolence. In effect, he says:<sup>1</sup> If benevolence were the whole of virtue, our "moral understanding and moral sense" would be indifferent to everything in actions except quantity of benevolence; but the moral understanding in fact does distinguish between better and worse *kinds* of benevolence; therefore, benevolence cannot be the whole of virtue. So even "were the Author of nature to propose nothing to himself as an end but the production of happiness, were his moral character merely that of benevolence; yet ours is not so."<sup>2</sup> The whole general atmosphere of both *Sermons* and *Analogy* makes it quite clear that Butler indubitably holds that God *does* propose to Himself as an end the happiness of mankind (although His character is not that of *mere* benevolence—He uses punishment<sup>3</sup> as well as reward in gaining His end). In this passage we have an explicit statement of the position of the *Analogy* that mankind is not to strive after happiness according to its own lights. What, then, are we to do? Follow conscience, is Butler's reply.

The second last paragraph of the Dissertation on Virtue is a plain statement of the position he is maintaining in the *Analogy*:

"Some of great and distinguished merit have, I think, expressed themselves in a manner, which may occasion some danger to careless readers, of imagining the whole of virtue to consist in singly aiming, according to the best of their judgment, at promoting the happiness of mankind in the present state; and the whole of vice, in doing what they foresee, or might foresee, is likely to produce an overbalance of unhappiness in it: than which mistakes, none can be conceived more terrible. For it is certain, that some of the most shocking instances of injustice, adultery, murder, perjury, and even of persecution, may, in many supposable cases, not have the appearance of being likely to produce an overbalance of misery in the present state; perhaps sometimes may have the contrary appearance. For this reflection might easily be carried on, but I forbear—. The happiness

<sup>1</sup> I, 334.

<sup>2</sup> I, 335.

<sup>3</sup> Even punishment, in God's hands, will in the long run increase the "total happiness of mankind."

of the world is the concern of him, who is the lord and the proprietor of it: nor do we know what we are about, when we endeavour to promote the good of mankind in any ways, but those which he has directed; that is indeed in all ways not contrary to veracity and justice."<sup>1</sup>

Butler appears to have a theory of fitness and unfitness (presumably, for once, following Clarke) but he does not develop it. It receives only incidental mention in one or two places, notably in this sentence near the end of the work: "I . . . have omitted a thing of the utmost importance which I do believe, the moral fitness and unfitness of actions, prior to all will whatever; which I apprehend as certainly to determine the Divine conduct, as speculative truth and falsehood necessarily determine the Divine judgment."<sup>2</sup> But a doctrine of fitness and unfitness cannot be given an important place in an account of Butler's ethics; he merely mentions the notion casually.

Another interesting passage in this connection is the following: "There is, in the nature of things, an original standard of right and wrong in actions, independent upon all will, but which unalterably determines the will of God, to exercise that moral government over the world, which religion teaches, i.e. finally and upon the whole to reward and punish men respectively as they act right or wrong; this assertion contains an abstract truth, as well as matter of fact."<sup>3</sup> The sentences which follow on this passage suggest that the reason why he did not make more of the notion of moral fitness and unfitness is that that would have meant leaving the practical method which he prefers to follow, and taking up the method of abstract reasoning. But he would rather remain on the level of the matter of fact. "And thus the obligations of religion are made out, exclusively of the questions concerning liberty and moral fitness; which have been perplexed with difficulties and abstruse reasonings, as everything may."<sup>4</sup>

It would be as well once more to offer a summary of the ethics of the *Analogy*; the main outline may have been obscured by the discussion of particular points in the last few pages. Butler holds, then:

(1) That to seek our own happiness is manifestly virtuous, but that human ignorance is such that we cannot attain it by our own efforts.

(2) That God, the end of Whose acts is the happiness of mankind, does know what we should do to bring about our happiness, and He instructs us accordingly.

(3) That we come to know God's instructions through intuitions—which are the immediate deliverances of conscience, God's voice within us.

<sup>1</sup> I, 336.

<sup>2</sup> I, 300.

<sup>3</sup> I, 301.

<sup>4</sup> I, 302.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

(4) That our duty is, then, to obey conscience, which is to obey God, and also eventually, in the next world if not in this, to attain our own happiness.

(5) But right is not made right by God's commanding it—there is an "eternal and immutable morality." God commands only what is right in itself.

We might express all this in a phrase, by saying that Butler, in the *Analogy*, is "an Empirical Intuitionist but a Transcendental Utilitarian."<sup>1</sup> That is to say, as far as the world of sense experience is concerned he is an Intuitionist, but behind that, in a "noumenal" world, is a Utilitarian God upon Whom the intuitions of everyday life depend.

### IV

We have now completed our outline of the ethical theories of the *Sermons* and the *Analogy*. It will have become apparent that a definite change of view is discernible in the later work. It is now necessary that we examine certain passages in the *Sermons* which may not at first sight appear to fall very easily under the interpretation of that work which was given above. It has already been remarked that Butler is an inconsistent writer. The separate treatment of *Sermons* and *Analogy* which has been attempted here removes most of the inconsistencies, but not all. The object of this section is to dispose of the few remaining.

As has just been stated, the passages which we are here to consider are from the *Sermons*. I have not been able to find any important passage in the *Analogy* which is inconsistent with the main position that Butler takes up in that work. There are probably two reasons why the *Sermons* suffers from this defect while the *Analogy* does not. (1) It will be remembered that Butler remarks in the Preface to the *Sermons* that his readers are not to look too closely for a connection between the *Sermons*, as they have been chosen quite at random from among the many which he had preached at the Rolls Chapel during a period of eight years. Accordingly, it is not to be wondered at if there are inconsistencies to be found by anyone who attempts to fit them together to make a coherent ethical system. As they stand, the *Sermons* are an excellent source-book for ethics, and contain some of the finest things in British moral philosophy, but they do not form a systematic treatise. On the other hand, the *Analogy* is a carefully written work, composed as a whole, and meant to be read as one sustained argument. Indeed, Butler was so anxious that the book should be read as a whole that he removed two longish passages, which had appeared in the body of the book in its first form,

<sup>1</sup> I have borrowed this Kantian parody from Dr. D. Daiches Raphael, but his interpretation of Butler is very different from mine.



and relegated them to an appendix, because he felt that they did not deal directly with the real subject of the work, and so might keep the reader's attention from the main argument too long. For this reason, although it is written in a difficult style, the *Analogy* is not open to the same charge of internal inconsistency as is the *Sermons*. (2) There is a second reason why there are inconsistencies in the *Sermons* and none (or none of importance) in the *Analogy*. The passages that are our concern in this section will be found to support the view that Butler was later to take up in the *Analogy*, rather than the usual view that he teaches in the *Sermons*. It seems fair to conclude that his mind must have been occupied with ideas along the lines of the treatment of ethics that he was later to make, and he allowed these ideas in their provisional form to enter the *Sermons*. It is worth noting that one of these passages occurs in the Preface, which was written for the second edition, published in 1729—three years after the first edition and seven years before the publication of the *Analogy*—and which may thus be considered to occupy a place midway in the development of his ethical theory. The passage in question, although it does not harmonize with the general doctrine of the *Sermons*, may be interpreted as reflecting the doctrine which was later to be fully developed in the *Analogy*, and which at this stage existed in embryo form in Butler's mind. Another difficult passage occurs in a footnote to one of the *Sermons*, and may also represent second thoughts on what he had said in the body of the Sermon, in the light of the same half-formed new doctrine.

We shall now proceed to the examination of the passages concerned. Those that will be considered are the only passages that call for separate treatment. Any other apparent inconsistencies are resolved when it is realized that the ethics of the *Sermons* is to be dealt with on its own ground. The difficulties are only apparent because they are made by the critics reading the earlier work in the light of what they already know about the later.

The first of these passages occurs in the Preface,<sup>1</sup> where Butler makes reference to Shaftesbury. He says that the great defect in Shaftesbury's ethics is his failure to take into account the *authority* of conscience. Shaftesbury, he says, "has shown beyond all contradiction that virtue is naturally the interest or happiness, and vice the misery, of such a creature as man, placed in the circumstances which we are in this world." But suppose a case where someone thought that his interest or happiness lay in behaving viciously. Shaftesbury says that such a case would be without remedy. But, says Butler, we need to be more explicit. Such a person would in fact be under an obligation to act viciously. "Interest, one's own happiness,

<sup>1</sup> II, 13.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

is a manifest obligation, and there is not supposed to be any other obligation in the case." The rest of the passage is worth quoting in full. First we have the words of an imaginary questioner, then Butler's reply.

"'But does it much mend the matter, to take in that natural authority of reflection? There indeed would be an obligation to virtue; but would not the obligation from supposed interest on the side of vice remain?' If it should, yet to be under two contrary obligations, i.e. under none at all, would not be exactly the same, as to be under a formal obligation to be vicious, or to be in circumstances in which the constitution of man's nature plainly required that vice should be preferred. But the obligation on the side of interest really does not remain. For the natural authority of the principle of reflection is an obligation the most near and intimate, the most certain and known: whereas the contrary obligation can at the utmost appear no more than probable; since no man can be *certain* in any circumstances that vice is his interest in the present world, much less can he be certain against another: and thus the certain obligation would entirely supersede and destroy the uncertain one: which yet would have been of real force without the former."<sup>1</sup>

Now, at first sight, this passage may not appear to be very favourable to the interpretation of the *Sermons* given in this article. Butler's general doctrine in the *Sermons* involves the practical identification of conscience and cool self-love, which principles he conceives as being never opposed but always leading the same way. But in the passage just quoted he seems to be saying that we should follow the dictates of conscience, which may be *in opposition* to those of self-love. Let us see if this is really so.

The important word in the passage is the word "supposed" in the remark of the imaginary questioner: "Would not the obligation from *supposed* interest on the side of vice remain?" It is supposed interest, not real interest, that Butler here speaks of as opposed to the dictates of conscience. Butler is saying something like this: "Shaftesbury maintains that virtue is our interest or happiness. He is right. But suppose someone to imagine that his happiness lies in vice. Conscience, which has authority over the other principles in human nature, should correct him and show him that he will be really happier if he follows virtue." The authority of conscience is exercised over supposed self-love, not over cool self-love.

Conscience, as reflection, will show supposed self-love for the false thing it is, and will make it clear that cool self-love is best served by acting virtuously. This is perfectly in harmony with the general teaching of the *Sermons*.

Butler continues in the next paragraph: "In truth the taking in

this consideration [sc., the authority of conscience] totally changes the whole state of the case; and shows, what this author does not seem to have been aware of, that the greatest degree of scepticism [sc., scepticism about the coincidence of virtue and happiness] which he thought possible will still leave men under the strictest moral obligations, whatever their opinion be concerning the happiness of virtue. . . . Though a man should doubt of everything else, yet he will still remain under the nearest and most certain obligation to the practice of virtue; an obligation implied in the very idea of virtue, in the very idea of reflex approbation."<sup>1</sup>

This passage is not inconsistent with Butler's original agreement with Shaftesbury's words, "virtue is naturally the interest or happiness, and vice the misery, of such a creature as man." We may have doubts about the ultimate coincidence of virtue and interest, but that is because we do not properly understand what is our interest. Our supposed interest is not always the same as our real interest; but our real interest always coincides with what our conscience prescribes.

There may be here a slight suggestion of the doctrine that Butler was later to develop in the *Analogy*. One might interpret the passage as a movement away from his emphasis on the reflective side of conscience, which is so marked in the *Sermons*, to the view in the later work that conscience makes "immediate judgments." Perhaps Butler's advice to Shaftesbury's "sceptic" might be: "Do what conscience tells you, and don't worry too much about whether you can harmonize virtue with your own happiness. God will do it for you in the end, but don't waste time now in considering it." It may well be that Butler is beginning already to think that he has laid too great a strain on the reasoning powers of weak fallible man, and is feeling his way towards his later theory.

The second passage occurs in a footnote to the Twelfth Sermon.

"As we are not competent judges, what is upon the whole for the good of the world, there may be other immediate ends appointed us to pursue, besides that one of doing good or producing happiness. Though the good of the creation be the only end of the Author of it, yet he may have laid us under particular obligations, which we may discern and feel ourselves under, quite distinct from a perception, that the observance or violation of them is for the happiness or misery of our fellow creatures. And this is in fact the case. For there are certain dispositions of mind, and certain actions, which are in themselves approved or disapproved by mankind, abstracted from the consideration of their tendency to the happiness or misery of the world; approved or disapproved by reflection, by that principle within, which is the guide of life, the judge of right and wrong. . . .

<sup>1</sup> II, 14.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

Fidelity, honour, strict justice, are themselves approved in the highest degree, abstracted from the consideration of their tendency. . . . The things now instanced in, and numberless others, are approved or disapproved by mankind in general, in quite another view than as conducive to the happiness or misery of the world."<sup>1</sup>

This passage seems to be another foreshadowing of the *Analogy* doctrine. In this Sermon, Butler has been urging the cause of benevolence. He points out the obligation we are under to promote the happiness of others. He does not emphasize, as he does elsewhere in the *Sermons*, the fact that reflection will lead us to maximize the happiness of others *because* it recognizes that that will best secure our *own* happiness. He speaks rather of the duty of promoting the happiness of others, apart from any belief that it will eventually pay us to do so. And then he goes on to speak, in this footnote, of other virtues besides benevolence which reflection seems to approve of, apart altogether from any notion we may have that they will benefit either ourselves or others.

The passage is not contrary to what has been maintained about Butler. Here we have the beginnings of the notion of human ignorance which was later to be worked out fully in the *Analogy*. We are not competent judges of what is *on the whole* for the happiness of mankind (and so for our own happiness) so God may have given us other *immediate* ends to pursue besides that of happiness. But this does not mean that the immediate ends are not themselves means to the *ultimate* end of human happiness. Indeed, the whole phrasing of the passage suggests that such things are to be pursued *because* we may be sure that they will eventually bring about happiness, although we may not be able to perceive this at the moment.

We now pass to consider a famous passage from the Eleventh Sermon. This has already been quoted. "Let it be allowed, though virtue or moral rectitude does indeed consist in affection to and pursuit of what is right and good, as such; yet, that when we sit down in a cool hour, we can neither justify to ourselves this or any other pursuit, till we are convinced that it will be for our happiness or at least not contrary to it."<sup>2</sup>

It may be wondered why this passage has been included among those we are considering. It is not inconsistent with the interpretation of the *Sermons* that has been offered in this article. But I cannot resist the temptation to consider it further. It is worth examining both for its own sake and because those who hold a different view of the *Sermons* from that expounded here have found it a great stumbling-block.

<sup>1</sup> II, 190.

<sup>2</sup> II, 173.

Professor Broad, in his account of Butler's ethics,<sup>1</sup> attempts to produce a systematic ethical theory by combining the teachings of both *Sermons* and *Analogy*. He apparently finds that the *Analogy* doctrine is the "real Butler," and then proceeds to harmonize what Butler had said in the *Sermons* with what he said in the later work. Butler is then represented as a rather inconsistent "Intuitionist" (or Deontologist). Professor Broad admits that there are "one or two" passages which do not fit into this theory, but attempts to explain these away. Thus, the passage we are at present examining is dismissed (as it had earlier been by Professor Taylor<sup>2</sup>) as a "hypothetical concession to an imaginary opponent," which does not reflect Butler's real position. Because the rational egoistic view of this passage does not seem to agree with the stern doctrine of duty for duty's sake to be found in the *Dissertation on Virtue*, Professor Broad assumes that Butler cannot have meant it. But, in fact, it is not this passage and others like it which are inconsistent with the *Sermons* doctrine—the inconsistent passages are those which Professor Broad takes as expressing the general view of the *Sermons*, viz. those of a Deontological character. Professor Broad seems to think that the "in a cool hour" passage, which we are now considering, stands almost alone; but it was the task of the second section of this article to demonstrate that in fact it is typical of the whole outlook of the *Sermons*. Professor Broad has read the *Sermons* in the light of the *Analogy*, and without realizing that Butler's views on ethics are definitely different in the two works.

However, we must be fair to Professor Broad. There is, on the surface, some support for his interpretation of the passage we are examining in terms of an oratorical concession to Butler's audience. Near the beginning of the Sermon from which the passage comes, Butler says, speaking of self-love, "there shall be all possible concessions made to the favourite passion, which hath so much allowed to it, and whose cause is so universally pleaded: it shall be treated with the utmost tenderness and concern for its interests."<sup>3</sup> (This delightfully ironic remark is, incidentally, one of the very few lighter touches that relieve the usual humourless severity of his style.) This may seem to give a certain justification to the interpretation of some of the passages in the Sermon in terms of concessions to the "smart set" who formed Butler's congregation at the Rolls Chapel. But what does Butler mean by "self-love" in the passage just quoted? Does he mean cool self-love? I think not. If we are to harmonize what follows with other passages in the *Sermons*, we must take it that he means supposed self-love. It seems to me quite clear that this is what he

<sup>1</sup> C. D. Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, Chapter III.

<sup>2</sup> A. E. Taylor, "Some Features of Butler's Ethics" (*Mind*, 1926).

<sup>3</sup> II, 157.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

does mean. He does not elsewhere speak of cool self-love as a "favourite passion"; a *passion* is precisely what cool self-love is not—it is a general principle superior to all the passions. But Professor Broad does not distinguish Butler's two uses of the word "self-love" (cool self-love and supposed self-love), and he appears simply to assume that it is cool self-love which Butler here treats in such a patronizing way. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Butler of the *Sermons* is not the man to speak disrespectfully of the rational principle of cool self-love. Though as for "false self-love," "unreasonable self-love," "passionate or sensual selfishness," Hobbes's self-love, self-love as conceived by the average complacent member of the congregation of the Rolls Chapel—Butler is ready to attack *that*, wherever and whenever he can.

But even granted that Professor Broad were right in his interpretation of the passage under consideration, it would still remain true, as has already been mentioned, that this Eleventh Sermon is not the only one where we see Butler in the rôle of rational egoist. There is no need to repeat here my reasons for saying this. As I have said, they are to be found in the second section of this article. The whole outlook of the *Sermons* is a rational egoistic one, and it is the passages which are inconsistent with this interpretation, not those which support it, which need to be explained, or explained away. Even if Butler, in a few places in this one Sermon, may have so expressed himself as to suggest that he did not mean what he said (and I should not agree that he has so expressed himself), it does not follow that all the Sermons are to be interpreted in this way. Professor Broad has not realized the all-pervasive nature of the rational egoistic view in the *Sermons*. If he had, he might not have dismissed it so easily. It is a very big thing to say (as Professor Broad appears bound to say) that every one of the Sermons is merely a concession to the fashionable Hobbes-Mandevillian doctrines so prominent in the thinking of the sort of people to whom Butler preached. There is nothing in Butler's life and writings to suggest that he was a man who could thus have lived a lie through eight years, teaching a doctrine he did not believe. I think there can be no doubt that Butler, when he preached (and probably when he published) the *Sermons*, honestly believed in rational egoism. The fact that he later changed his mind does not affect the case. The theory of the earlier work is not to be confused with that of the later.

### V

I shall begin this section by again summarizing the main points of Butler's two ethical theories. It will be convenient if I may be allowed to reproduce here (with slight changes) the summaries of

each that I have already given. For purposes of comparison it will be easier if we have these summaries together in one place.

(It may be mentioned that the numbered points under (a) below are not meant to correspond with the similarly numbered points under (b).)

## (a) *The Ethical Theory of the Sermons.*

(1) Man's basic duty is to seek his own happiness.

(2) Because he is a social animal he cannot gain his own happiness unless he is willing to further the happiness of others.

(3) If he does what will conduce to his own happiness he will also be doing what is right. The ground or criterion of rightness (though not its definition) is "conduciveness to the agent's interest."

(4) The faculty of reflection discovers for us our duty/interest in any circumstances by a process of hard reasoning.

## (b) *The Ethical Theory of the Analogy.*

(1) To seek our own happiness is virtuous (although it is not the whole of virtue), but human ignorance is such that we cannot attain it by our own efforts.

(2) God, the end of Whose acts is the happiness of mankind, does know what we should do to bring about our happiness, and He instructs us accordingly.

(3) We come to know God's instructions through intuitions—which are the immediate deliverances of conscience, God's voice within us.

(4) Our duty is, then, to obey conscience, which is to obey God, and also, eventually, in the next world if not in this, to attain our own happiness.

(5) But right is not made right by God's commanding it—there is an "eternal and immutable morality." God commands only what is right in itself.

The main points of similarity between the two theories may be briefly mentioned before the differences are listed.

(i) In both theories, right and good exist objectively; they are independent of both God and man.

(ii) Right and good are not to be defined in terms of anything else. In the *Sermons* Butler gives a criterion of rightness, but no definition. In the *Analogy* he does not even attempt to give a criterion. The distinction between definitions of right and criteria or grounds of rightness belongs, of course, to the most modern period of ethical theory, and I do not mean to suggest that Butler explicitly notes the distinction, and declares in as many words that he is not attempting to define right but merely giving a criterion of it. What I do mean is that

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

a present-day reader of Butler's *Sermons* and *Analogy*, who is familiar with this distinction, which has proved so valuable in ethics since it was first made by Professor Moore, may readily see that Butler, although he probably did not realize the distinction, in fact does not confuse the two things; for he nowhere tries to define right, but merely gives a criterion of it. Moral rectitude consists in "affection to and pursuit of what is right and good as such." But if we would be sure about what acts are "right as such" we have the criterion, "conduciveness to our happiness." Butler would probably have been very glad to echo Professor Moore's well-known remark (with a necessary alteration, for Butler is concerned with right, not good): "If I am asked 'What is Right?' my answer is that right is right, and that is the end of the matter. Or if I am asked, 'How is right to be defined?' my answer is that it cannot be defined, and that is all I have to say about it."<sup>1</sup>

(iii) *Sermons* and *Analogy* are alike in that they contain no very satisfactory account of obligation. As has just been mentioned, Butler is more concerned with questions of right than with questions of good, but for all that he nowhere bothers to examine the whole notion of right and obligation.

(iv) In both works, Butler believes firmly in the ultimate coincidence of duty and interest, virtue and happiness.

(v) In both works, he denies that there is any necessary opposition between self-love and benevolence.

(vi) In both works, Butler tries to avoid "abstract," *a priori* arguments, and confines himself to matters of fact. However, we should bear in mind as a qualification of this, the statement made above about the theological basis of the *Analogy* theory.

(vii) In both *Sermons* and *Analogy*, Butler holds what Professor Broad calls "the interesting view" that God is a Utilitarian.

I shall now try to set down briefly the important differences between Butler's two theories.

(i) The division of human nature into a hierarchical system of principles belongs to the *Sermons*, and is not referred to in the *Analogy*. But there does not seem to be anything in the *Analogy* theory which would conflict with this notion of separate principles in human nature, so we may assume that Butler still held the doctrine, although he saw no occasion to refer to it again.

(ii) The most important difference between the ethical theories of *Sermons* and *Analogy* is the change from the rational conscience of the former to the "intuitive" (in the sense of "immediate-judgment-making") conscience of the latter.

<sup>1</sup> G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, p. 6.



(iii) Consequences are taken into account in the *Sermons* theory—that is to say, actual consequences, not merely intended consequences. One of the things the faculty of reflection (conscience in the *Sermons*) must consider is consequences. And the criterion of conduciveness to the agent's happiness clearly involves reference to consequences. This may be compared with the *Analogy* theory, where actual consequences are held to be of no interest to conscience when it makes its judgments—although, of course, intended consequences are important.

(iv) The practical identification of conscience and cool self-love which is involved in the ethical theory of the *Sermons* is not to be found in the *Analogy*. Or rather, to be more explicit, while in the later work Butler still believes that ultimately virtuous acts will lead to our own happiness, he no longer identifies the *faculties* of conscience and cool self-love.

(v) There is a difference in the relative importance of the notion of obligation in *Sermons* and *Analogy*. In neither work does Butler satisfactorily discuss the nature and meaning of obligation, but he does seem to emphasize the notion more strongly in the *Analogy* than in the *Sermons*.

Obligation, in the *Sermons*, may be most simply summed up by saying that it is an obligation to "act according to our true natures," or, to express the same thing differently, "to realize our true natures." (I know this second phrase is objectionably vague and ambiguous, but, for all that, I think it expresses what Butler means.) We may reduce all duties to one, though Butler does not himself do this explicitly. We have done our duty if we have striven worthily to "realize our true natures." As Butler uses the expression "true nature" this means a good deal. To act in accordance with our true nature means to act according to a proper arrangement of our instincts and principles of action; it means to act rationally; to follow the dictates of the faculty of reflection which shows us our real interest; it means to resist the promptings of those appetites and affections of which reflection does not approve. We are so made that, in fact, we do not always act according to our true nature. But we *ought* so to act; and if we could indeed realize our true nature, we should have arrived at the state in which we always act from rational motives directed to the attainment of our own real happiness.

In the *Analogy*, however, our duties do not seem so easily resolvable into one basic duty: "Realize your true nature." In the *Analogy* doctrine there are many duties, and we know these by intuitions. Knowing them, we are to do them, without consciously aiming at producing good consequences either for ourselves or for others.

(vi) The *Sermons* is not so theological as the *Analogy*. Butler, in the *Sermons*, uses little in the way of specifically religious argument.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUTLER'S ETHICS

He urges the pursuit of virtue upon his hearers, but that virtue is indistinguishable from prudence, and he does not often seek to justify it in religious terms. When he appeals to the sense of duty of his congregation, he appeals to them not as god-fearing men, but as cautious eyers of the main chance. It may sound odd to say of sermons that they are not theological, but Butler's *Sermons* are certainly not as theological as his *Analogy*.

My task is almost at an end. I have outlined the ethical theories of Butler's two works; and have pointed out the main similarities and differences between the theories.

I shall not attempt to account for the differences; I feel it better not to enter the field of speculation by attempting to explain his possible reasons for changing his mind on ethics. It is enough if I have demonstrated that he has done so.

It only remains to offer one or two general remarks.

The theory of the *Analogy* seems to accord better with the moral judgments of ordinary people than does that of the *Sermons*. It is the *Analogy* doctrine that has usually been taken as Butler's theory, and there can be no objection to this, for it evidently represents his more mature judgments on ethical matters.

Butler's place among the British moralists is secure. His refutation of Hobbes's psychological hedonism in the *Sermons* is one of the clearest and most convincing pieces of reasoning to be found in any work on ethics. His *Analogy* doctrine entitles him to rank as a chief spokesman of modern deontological ethics.

One cannot but feel, in reading Butler, that his writings have a certain nobility of expression, despite his difficult style. There is never a superfluous word, and perhaps the obscurities of his style are in some measure due to the fact that his were—

"Thoughts hardly to be pack'd  
Into a narrow act."

As he himself said in the Preface to the *Sermons*: "It is very unallowable for a work of imagination or entertainment not to be of easy comprehension, but may be unavoidable in a work of another kind, where a man is not to form or accommodate, but to state things as he finds them."<sup>1</sup>

There are phrases and sentences in Butler whose aphoristic quality makes them hard to forget: "Probability is the guide of life," "Every thing is what it is, and not another thing," and many more.

There is some justification for the lines in his epitaph:

"His eloquence was like a chain of gold,  
That the wild passions of mankind controll'd."

<sup>1</sup> II, 3.

However, it is not Butler as a writer with whom we have been concerned, but Butler as a philosopher. It is hoped that the attempt here made to disentangle what I feel to be two distinct theories in his work may be of value in the better understanding of "the most sagacious, if not the most consistent or systematic, of the British Moralists."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. D. Ross, *Foundations of Ethics*, p. 77.

(Concluded.)

# ETHICAL INTUITIONISM

P. F. STRAWSON, M.A.

*North.*—What is the trouble about moral facts? When someone denies that there is an objective moral order, or asserts that ethical propositions are pseudo-propositions, cannot I refute him (rather as Moore refuted those who denied the existence of the external world) by saying: "You know very well that Brown did wrong in beating his wife. You know very well that you ought to keep promises. You know very well that human affection is good and cruelty bad, that many actions are wrong and some are right"?

*West.*—Isn't the trouble about moral facts another case of trouble about knowing, about learning? We find out facts about the external world by looking and listening; about ourselves, by feeling; about other people, by looking and listening *and* feeling. When this is noticed, there arises a wish to say that the facts *are* what is seen, what is heard, what is felt; and, consequently, that moral facts fall into one of these classes. So those who have denied that there are "objective moral characteristics" have not wanted to deny that Brown's action was wrong or that keeping promises is right. They have wanted to point out that rightness and wrongness are a matter of what is felt in the heart, not of what is seen with the eyes or heard with the ears. They have wanted to emphasize the way in which "Promise-keeping is right" resembles "Going abroad is exciting," "Stories about mothers-in-law are comic," "Bombs are terrifying"; and differs from "Roses are red" and "Sea-water is salt." This does not prevent you from talking about the moral order, or the moral world, if you want to; but it warns you not to forget that the only access to the moral world is through remorse and approval and so on; just as the only access to the world of comedy is through laughter; and the only access to the coward's world is through fear.

*North.*—I agree, of course, that we cannot see the goodness of something as we see its colour, or identify rightness by the sense of touch; though I think you should add that the senses are indispensable as a means of our becoming aware of those characteristics upon which moral characteristics depend. You may be partly right, too, in saying that access to the moral world is obtained through experience of the moral emotions; for it may be that only when our moral feelings have been strongly stirred do we first become clearly aware of the characteristics which evoke these feelings. But these feelings are not identical with that awareness. "Goodness" does not stand to "feeling approval," "guilt" to "feeling guilty," "obligation" to "feeling

bound," as "excitingness" stands to "being excited" and "humorousness" to "feeling amused." To use the jargon for a moment: moral characteristics and relations are non-empirical, and awareness of them is neither sensory nor introspectual. It is a different kind of awareness, which the specialists call "intuition": and it is only empiricist prejudice which prevents your acknowledging its existence. Once acknowledged, it solves our problems: and we see that while "Promise-keeping is right" differs from "The sea is salt," this is not because it resembles "Detective-stories are exciting"; it differs from *both* in being the report neither of a sensible nor an introspectible experience, but of an intuition. We may, perhaps, know some moral characteristics mediately, through others. ("Obligation" is, perhaps, definable in terms of "goodness.") But at least one such characteristic—rightness or goodness—is unanalysable, and known by intuition alone. The fundamental cognitive situation in morals is that in which we intuit the rightness of a particular action or the goodness of a particular state of affairs. We see this moral characteristic as present in virtue of some other characteristics, themselves capable of being described in empirical terms, which the action or state of affairs possesses. (This is why I said that sense-perception is a necessary, though not a sufficient, condition of obtaining information about the moral order.) Our intuition, then, is not a bare intuition of the moral characteristic, but also the intuition of its dependence on some others: so that this fundamental situation yields us, by intuitive induction, knowledge of moral rules, generalizations regarding the right and the good, which we can apply in other cases, even when an actual intuition is lacking. So much do these rules become taken for granted, a part of our habitual moral life, that most of our everyday moral judgments involve merely an implicit reference to them: a reference which becomes explicit only if the judgment is challenged or queried. Moral emotions, too, assume the character of habitual reactions. But emotions and judgments alike are grounded upon intuitions. Emotion may be the gatekeeper to the moral world; but intuition is the gate.

*West.*—Not so fast. I understand you to say that at least one fundamental moral characteristic—rightness or goodness—is unanalysable. Perhaps both are. The experts are divided. In any case, the fundamental characteristic (or characteristics) can be known only by intuitive awareness of its presence in some particular contemplated action or state of affairs. There is, then, a kind of analogy between the word "right" (or "good") and the name of some simple sensible characteristic such as "red."<sup>1</sup> Just as everybody who understands the word "red" has seen some red things, so everybody who

<sup>1</sup> Cf. D. Daiches Raphael, *The Moral Sense*, Chapters V and VI.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, p. 7 *et seq.*

understands the word "right" or the word "good" has intuited the character, rightness, in some actions, or the character, goodness, in some states of affairs; and nobody who has not intuited these characters understands the words "right" or "good." But this is not quite enough, is it? In order for me to know *now* the meaning of an indefinable word, it is not enough that a certain perceptual or intuitional event should have occurred at some particular point in my history; for I might not only have forgotten the details of that event; I might have forgotten what *kind* of an event it was; I might not know *now* what it would be like for such an event to occur. If the word "red" expresses an indefinable visual concept, then it is self-contradictory to say: "I know what the word 'red' means, but I can't remember ever *seeing* red and I don't know what it would be *like* to see red." Similarly, if the word "right," or the word "good," expresses an indefinable intuitive concept, then it is self-contradictory to say: "I know what the word 'right' or the word 'good' means, but I can't remember ever *intuiting* rightness or goodness, and I don't know what it would be *like* to intuit rightness or goodness." If your theory is true, then this statement is a contradiction.

But it is not at all obvious to me that it is a contradiction. I should be quite prepared to assert that I understood the words "right" and "good," but that I couldn't remember ever intuiting rightness or goodness and that I couldn't imagine what it would be like to do so. And I think it is quite certain that I am not alone in this, but that there are a large number of people who are to be presumed capable of accurate reporting of their own cognitive experience, and who would find nothing self-contradictory in saying what I say. And if this is so, you are presented with a choice of two possibilities. The first is that the words "right" and "good" have quite a different meaning for one set of people from the meaning which they have for another set. But neither of us believes this. The second is that the intuitionist theory is a mistake; that the phrase "intuitional event having a moral characteristic as its object (or a part of its object)" is a phrase which describes nothing at all; or describes misleadingly the kind of emotional experience we both admit. There is no third possibility. It is no good saying: "All people who succeed in learning the meaning of moral words do as a matter of fact have moral intuitions, but unfortunately many people are inclined to forget them, to be quite unable to remember what they are like." True, there would be nothing self-contradictory in saying this: but it would simply be a variant of the first possibility; for I cannot be said to know *now* the meaning of a word expressing an intuitive concept unless I know now what it would be like to intuit the characteristic of which it is a concept. The trouble with your intuitionist theory is that, if true, it should be a truism. There should be no doubt about the occurrence

of the distinctive experience of intuiting rightness (or goodness), and about its being the only way to learn the meaning of the primary moral words; just as there is no doubt about the occurrence of seeing red (or blue), and about this being the only way to learn the meaning of the primary colour words. But there *is* doubt; and over against this doubt there rises a certainty: the certainty that we all know what it is to *feel* guilty, to *feel* bound, to *feel* approving.

*North.*—What I have said *is* a truism; and that is its strength. It is not I who am inventing a mythical faculty, but you, irritated, perhaps, by the language of intuitionism, who are denying the obvious. When you said that you couldn't *imagine* what it would be like to have moral intuitions, isn't it clear that you wanted "intuiting a moral characteristic" to be like seeing a colour or hearing a sound? Naturally you couldn't *imagine* anything of the sort. But I have already pointed out that moral characteristics are dependent on others of which the presence is ascertainable by looking and listening. You do not intuit rightness or goodness independently of the other features of the situation. You intuit *that* an action is (or would be) right, a state of affairs good, *because* it has (or would have) certain other empirically ascertainable qualities. The total content of your intuition includes the "because" clause. Of course, our ordinary moral judgments register unreflective reactions. Nevertheless "This act is right (or this state of affairs is good) because it has P, Q, R"—where "P, Q, R" stand for such empirically ascertainable qualities—expresses the type of fundamental cognitive situation in ethics, of which our normal judgments are copies, mediated by habit, but ready, if challenged, to become explicit as their original. Consider what happens when someone dissents from your opinion. You produce reasons. And this is not a matter of accounting for an emotional condition; but of bringing evidence in support of a verdict.

*West.*—When the jury brings in a verdict of guilty on a charge of murder, they do so because the facts adduced in evidence are of the kind covered by the definition of "murder." When the chemical analyst concludes that the material submitted for analysis is a salt, he does so because it exhibits the defining properties of a salt. The evidence is the sort of thing that is *meant* by "murder," by "salt." But the fundamental moral word, or words, you say, cannot be defined; their concepts are unanalysable. So it cannot be in this way that the "because" clause of your ethical sentence functions as evidence. "X is a right action because it is a case of promise-keeping" does not work like "X is a salt because it is a compound of basic and acid radicals"; for, if "right" is indefinable, "X is right" does not *mean* "X is an act of promise-keeping or of relieving distress or of telling the truth or . . ."

When I say "It will be fine in the morning; for the evening sky is

red," the evidence is of a different sort. For I might observe the fine morning without having noticed the state of the evening sky. But you have rightly stressed the point that there is no *independent* awareness of *moral* qualities: that they are always "seen" as dependent on those other features mentioned in the "because" clause. So it is not in this way, either, that the "because" clause of your ethical sentence functions as evidence. And there is no other way. Generally, we may say that whenever  $q$  is evidence for  $p$ , *either*  $q$  is the sort of thing we mean by " $p$ " (" $p$ " is definable in terms of " $q$ ") or we can have knowledge of the state of affairs described by " $p$ " independently of knowledge of the state of affairs described by " $q$ ." But neither of these conditions is satisfied by the  $q$ , the "because" clause, of your ethical sentence.

The "because" clause, then, does not, as you said it did, constitute evidence for the ethical judgment. And this, it seems to me, should be a serious matter for you. For where is such evidence to be found? It is no good saying that, after all, the ethical judgments of other people (or your own at other times) may corroborate your own present judgment. They may agree with it: but their agreement strengthens the probability of your judgment only on the assumption that their moral intuitions tend on the whole to be correct. But the only possible evidence for the existence of a *tendency* to have correct intuitions is the correctness of *actual* intuitions. And it is precisely the correctness of actual intuitions for which we are seeking evidence, and failing to find it.

And evidence you must have, if your account of the matter is correct. You will scarcely say that ethical intuitions are infallible; for ethical disagreements may survive the resolution of factual disagreements. (You might, of course, say that *genuine* intuitions were infallible: then the problem becomes one of finding a criterion for distinguishing between the genuine ones and those false claimants that carry the same inner conviction.) So your use of the language of "unanalysable predicates ascribed in moral judgment to particular actions and states of affairs" leads to contradiction. For to call such a judgment "*non-infallible*" would be meaningless unless there were some way of checking it; of confirming or confuting it, by producing evidence for or against it. But I have just shown that your account of these judgments is incompatible with the possibility of producing evidence for or against them. So, if your account is true, these judgments are both corrigible and incorrigible; and this is absurd.

But the absurdity points to the solution. Of course these judgments are corrigible: but not in the way in which the diagnosis of a doctor is corrigible; rather in the way in which the musical taste of a child is corrigible. Correcting them is not a matter of *producing evidence* for



## PHILOSOPHY

them or their contraries, though it is (partly) a matter of *giving reasons* for them or their contraries. We say, warningly, that ethical judgments are corrigible, because ethical disagreement sometimes survives the resolution of factual disagreement. We say, encouragingly, that ethical judgments are corrigible, because the resolution of factual disagreement sometimes leads to the resolution of ethical disagreement. But the one kind of agreement leads (when it *does* lead) to the other, not in the way in which agreed evidence leads to an agreed conclusion, but in the way in which common experience leads to sympathy. The two kinds of agreement, the two kinds of judgment, are as different as chalk from cheese. Ordinary language can accommodate the difference without strain: it is the pseudo-precise philosophical use of "judgment" which slurs over the difference and raises the difficulty. Is it not clear, then, what people have meant when they said that ethical disagreements were like disagreements in taste, in choice, in practical attitude? Of course, as you said, when we produce our reasons, we are not often simply giving the causes of our emotional condition. But neither are we producing evidence for a verdict, for a moral diagnosis. We are using the facts to back our attitudes, to appeal to the capacity of others to feel as we feel, to respond as we respond.

*North.*—I think I see now what you have been leaving out all the time. First, you accused me of inventing a mythical faculty to give us ethical knowledge. Then, when I pointed out that ethical qualities are not intuited out of all relation to other empirically ascertainable features of actions and states of affairs, but are intuited as dependent upon these, you twisted this dependence out of all recognition. You wanted to make it like the causal dependence of a psychological disposition upon some empirical feature of its object: as a child's fondness for strawberries depends upon their sweetness. But the connection between wrongness and giving pain to others is not an accident of our constitution; nor does its perception require any special faculty—but *simply that which we use in all our reasoning*. From the fact that an action involves inflicting needless pain upon others, *it follows* necessarily that the action is wrong, just as, from the fact that a triangle is equilateral, it follows necessarily that its angles are equal. This is the kind of dependence that we intuit; not an analytic dependence, but a synthetic entailment; and this is why the "because" clause of my ethical sentence does, after all, constitute evidence for the ascription of the moral characteristic.

I can anticipate the obvious objection. No moral rule, you will say, no moral generalization concerning the rightness of acts or the goodness of conditions, holds without exception. It is always possible to envisage circumstances in which the generalization breaks down.

\* Cf. Charles Stevenson, *Ethics and Language*, Chapter 1.

Or, if the generalization is so wide that no counter-example can be found, if it can be so interpreted as to cover every case, then it has become too wide: it has become tautologous, like "It is always right to do that which will have the best results on the whole," or intolerably vague, like "It is always right to treat people as ends in themselves" or "The greatest good is the greatest general welfare." It is plainly not with the help of such recipes as these that we find out what is right, what is good, in a particular case. There are no criteria for the meaning of "treating a man as an end," for "the greatest general welfare," which do not presuppose the narrower criteria of rightness and goodness of which I spoke and which seem always to have exceptions. All this is true. But it calls only for a trifling amendment to those narrower criteria. We cannot, for example, assert, as a necessary synthetic proposition, "All acts of promise-keeping are right" or "All states of aesthetic enjoyment are good." But we *can* assert, as a necessary synthetic proposition, "All acts of promise-keeping *tend as such* to be right (or have *prima facie* rightness)"<sup>1</sup> or "All states of aesthetic enjoyment *tend as such* to be good." And we derive our knowledge of such general necessary connections from seeing, in particular cases, that the rightness of an action, the goodness of a state, *follows from* its being an action or state of a certain kind.

*West.*—Your "trifling amendment" is a destructive one. When we say of swans that they tend to be white, we are not ascribing a certain quality, namely "tending to be white," to each individual swan. We are saying that the number of swans which are white exceeds the number of those which are not, that if anything is a swan, the chances are that it will be white. When we say "Welshmen tend to be good singers," we mean that most Welshmen sing well; and when we say, of an *individual* Welshman, that *he* tends to sing well, we mean that he sings well more often than not. In all such cases, we are talking of a *class* of things or occasions or events; and saying, not that *all* members of the class have the property of *tending-to-have* a certain characteristic, but that *most* members of the class do in fact have that characteristic. Nobody would accept the claim that a sentence of the form "*Most* As are Bs" expresses a necessary proposition. Is the claim made more plausible by re-writing the proposition in the form "*All* As *tend to be* Bs"?

But, waiving this point, there remains the difficulty that the need for such an amendment to our moral generalizations is incompatible with the account you gave of the way in which we come to know both the moral characteristics of individual actions and states, and the moral generalizations themselves. You said that we intuited the moral characteristic as *following from* some empirically ascertainable

<sup>1</sup> Ross, *Foundations of Ethics*, pp. 83-86; Broad, "Some of the Main Problems of Ethics," *Philosophy*, 1946, p. 117.

features of the action or state. True, if we did so, we should have implicitly learnt a moral generalization: but it would be one asserting *without qualification* the entailment of the moral characteristic by these other features of the case. In other words, and to take your instance, if it *ever* follows, from the fact that an act has the empirically ascertainable features described by the phrase "being an act of promise-keeping," that the act is right, then it *always* follows, from the fact that an act is of this kind, that it has this moral quality. If, then, it is true that we intuit moral characteristics as thus "following from" others, it is false that the implied generalizations require the "trifling amendment"; and if it is true that they require the amendment, it is false that we so intuit moral characteristics.<sup>1</sup>

And this is all that need be said of that rationalist superstition according to which a quasi-logical necessity binds moral predicates to others. "Le coeur a ses raisons, que la raison ne connaît pas": this is the whole truth of the matter: but your attention was so riveted to the first half of it that you forgot the second.

Looking for a logical nexus where there was none to be found, you overlooked the logical relations of the ethical words among themselves. And so you forgot what has often enough been pointed out: that for every expression containing the words "right" or "good," used in their ethical senses, it is always possible to find an expression with the same meaning, but containing, instead of these, the word "ought." The equivalences are various, and the variations subtle; but they are always to be found. For one to say, for example, "I know where the good lies, I know what the right course is; but I don't know the end I *ought* to aim at, the course I *ought* to follow" would be self-contradictory. "Right"-sentences, "good"-sentences are shorthand for "ought"-sentences. And this is enough in itself to explode the myth of unanalysable characteristics designated by the indefinable predicates, "right" and "good." For "ought" is a *relational* word; whereas "right" and "good" are *predicative*. The simplest sentences containing "ought" are syntactically more complicated than the simplest

<sup>1</sup> One desperate expedient might occur to North. He might say that it is not the bare presence of the promise-keeping feature that entails the rightness of the act, but the presence of this feature, coupled with the absence of any features which would entail its wrongness. His general rules would then be, not of the form " $x$  has  $\phi$  entails ' $x$  is right'," but of the form " $x$  has  $\phi$  and  $x$  has no  $\psi$  such that ' $x$  has  $\psi$ ' entails ' $x$  is wrong'" entails ' $x$  is right.'" But the suggestion is inadmissible, since (i) the establishment of the general proposition " $x$  has no  $\psi$ , etc." would require the enumeration of all those features which would make it wrong to keep a promise, and (ii) any rule of the form " $x$  has  $\phi$  entails ' $x$  is wrong'" would require expansion in exactly the same way as the "right-making" rule; which would involve an infinite regress of such expansions. Besides having this *theoretical* defect, the suggested model is, of course, *practically* absurd.

## ETHICAL INTUITIONISM

sentences containing "right" or "good." And hence, since the equivalences of meaning hold, the various ethical usages of "right" and "good" are all definable: variously definable in terms of "ought."

Of course this last consideration alone is not decisive against intuitionism. If this were all, you could still re-form the ranks: taking your stand on an intuited unanalysable non-natural relation of obligation, and admitting the definability of the ethical predicates in terms of this relation. But the objections I have already raised apply with equal force against this modified position; and, in other ways, its weakness is more obvious.<sup>1</sup>

*North.*—Well, then, suppose we agree to bury intuitionism. What have you to offer in its place? Has any analysis of moral judgments in terms of feeling ever been suggested which was not monstrously paradoxical or artificial? Even the simplest ethical sentence obstinately resists translation: and not in the way in which "Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass, Stains the white radiance of eternity" resists translation. For the ethical language is not the language of the poets, but the language of all the world. Somehow justice must be done both to this irreducible element of significance in ethical sentences, and to the community of knowledge of their correct, their appropriate, use. Intuitionism, at any rate, was a way of attempting to do this.

*West.*—Yes, intuitionism was a way of attempting to do this. It started from the fact that thousands and thousands of people can say, with perfect propriety: "I know that this is right, that is good"; and ended, as we have seen, by making it inexplicable how anybody could ever say such a thing. This was because of a failure to notice that the whole sentence, including the "I know," and not just the

<sup>1</sup> E.g. There was a certain plausibility in saying "My feeling morally obliged to pursue such a course (or end) presupposes my believing that it is right (or good)," and thence concluding that this belief cannot be "reduced to" the feeling which it arouses (For examples of this sort of argument, see Ross, *op. cit.*, pp. 261-262, and Broad, *op. cit.*, p. 115.) But the weakness of the reasoning is more clearly exposed when the sentence is re-written as "My feeling morally obliged to pursue such a course presupposes my believing that I am morally obliged to pursue it." The point is that "presupposes" and "believing" are both ambiguous. If "presupposes" means "causally requires" and "believing" is used in its ordinary sense, then it is obviously false that the beliefs which occasion such a feeling invariably include some belief which would be correctly described in these terms. (Compare: "My feeling frightened presupposes my believing that I am frightened.") But the argument begins to have weight against the "analysability" of beliefs correctly so described only if they are invariably present as occasioning factors. If, on the other hand, "presupposes" means "logically requires," then "believing" might be used in a queer sense such that the sentence is *tautologically* true. But this result is secured only by defining "believing" (used in this sense) in terms of feeling (compare the sense in which "thinking *x* funny" means "being amused by *x*"): and this was precisely the result which North sought to avoid.

last word in the subordinate clause, is a unit of the ethical language; and, following upon this failure, a feverish ransacking of the drawers of a Theory of Knowledge for an "I know" which would fit. (Do I, perhaps, work it out like the answer to a sum?)

The man who attempts to provide a translation sees more than this. He sees, at any rate, that the sentence must be treated as a unit. His error is to think that he can find a substitute, in a different language, which will serve the same purpose. So long as he confines himself to describing how, in what sort of circumstances, the sentence is used, he does valuable work. He errs when he talks as if to say how a sentence is used is the same as to use it. The man who says he can translate ethical sentences into feeling sentences makes the same sort of mistake as some who said they could (if they had time) translate material-object sentences into sentences about actual and possible sense-experiences. What they *mean*—the commentary they are making on the use of the ethical language or the material-object language—is correct. And it is precisely because the commentary would be incorrect as a translation that it is useful as a commentary. For it brings out the fact that the irreducibility of these languages arises from the systematic vagueness of the notation they use in comparison with that of the commentary-languages, and not from their being used to talk of, to describe, different things from those of which the commentary-languages talk. This descriptive vagueness is no defect: it is what makes these languages useful for the kinds of communication (and persuasion) for which they are severally required. But by being mistaken for something more than it is, it leads to one kind of metaphysics: the metaphysics of substance (the thing-in-itself), or of intuited unanalysable ethical characteristics. And by being ignored altogether, it leads to another kind of metaphysics: the tough metaphysics of translation, the brutal suggestion that we could get along just as well without the ethical language. Neither metaphysics—neither the tender metaphysics of ultimacy, nor the tough metaphysics of reduction<sup>1</sup>—does justice to the facts: but the latter does them less injustice; for it doesn't seek to supplement them with a fairy-tale.

And so the alternative to intuitionism is not the provision of translations. For the communication and sharing of our moral experience, we must use the tools, the ethical language, we have. No sentences provided by the philosopher will take their place. His task is not to supply a new set of tools, but to describe what it is that is communicated and shared, and how the tools are used to do the work. And though the experience he describes is emotional experience, his descriptions are not like those of the psychologist. The psychologist is concerned with the relation of these experiences to others of a

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Wisdom, "Metaphysics and Verification," *Mind*, 1938.

## ETHICAL INTUITIONISM

different sort; the philosopher is concerned with their relation to the ordinary use of ethical language. Of course, then, it would be absurd for the philosopher to deny that some actions are right (fair, legitimate, etc.) and others wrong (unfair, illegitimate, etc.), and that we know this; and absurd to claim that we can say what such sentences say without using such words. For this is the language we use in sharing and shaping our moral experience; and the occurrence of experience so shared, so shaped, is not brought into question.

We are in the position of the careful phenomenalist; who, for all his emphasis on sense-experience, neither denies that there is a table in the dining-room, nor claims to be able to assert this without using such words as "dining-room" and "table." A phenomenism as careful as this has been said to forfeit the right to be called a "philosophical doctrine."<sup>1</sup> Then let the title be reserved for the productions of those who rest in myth or paradox, and fail to complete that journey, from the familiar to the familiar,<sup>2</sup> which is philosophical analysis.

<sup>1</sup> Hardie, "The Paradox of Phenomenalism," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 1945-46, p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> Wisdom.

# MORALITY AND RELIGION :

PROFESSOR H. D. LEWIS.

BELIEF in the ultimacy and distinctiveness of ethical principles has been challenged in many ways to-day. The advance of science, especially in the fields of psychology and anthropology, has provided the relativist and the sceptic with many new weapons to put in their armoury; and the positivist has launched a very subtle attack. The present state of society, both in the internal affairs of the peoples of the world and in their inter-relations, has brought many moral principles into contempt. But there have also been notable advances, especially where more self-effacing virtue is concerned. Philosophers have also rebutted the attacks of the sceptic with peculiar incisiveness and vigour; indeed we know better to-day than at any other time just what we must hold if the objectivity of ethics is to be maintained. How the battle is going is by no means easy to determine. But there is one corner of the field, and that the one from which the most powerful attack of all may be delivered, which the upholder of the ultimacy of moral truths has left almost wholly undefended, so lightly does he estimate the danger from that quarter. That is the religious one. Account has been taken of the arguments of the sociologist and the Freudian psychologist, but it has been assumed, with astonishing naïveté, that religion is an ally to be wholly relied upon. But morality and religion have often been in conflict, and they seem to be so as much as ever to-day. For some of the most powerful forces in our religious life, and those which are in some ways most attuned to our needs, seem to be wholly inimical to the moral life. It is with this aspect of the vast problem of morality and religion that we can best concern ourselves in a course with the general title of "Moral and Political Conflicts of Our Time."

The distinctive feature of religious thought at the present time is the emphasis on the transcendent character of God. Theories which seek to describe the nature of God exhaustively in terms of the nature and activities of man himself are entirely out of favour, even among the most liberal type of theologian. The change has indeed been rather sharp. For it is not so long ago since leading religious thinkers turned with great eagerness to William James's idea of a "finite God," a God himself courageously taking his place in the van of the battle which man has also to wage; thinkers even accorded a welcome to crude and obscure ideas of God as a Life Force or as an emergent

\* Series: *Moral and Political Conflicts of our Time.*

God, a God gradually coming to be in the process of history; and it was sometimes believed that the idea of God as a "useful illusion" or a mere projection of man himself was not incompatible with the highest interests of religion. But it is generally understood now that humanistic conceptions of this sort, though by no means everything that has gone under the ambiguous name of humanism, do not accord at all with what we mean when we think of God or with the testimony of religious experience. We learn rather that God is "above" or "beyond" the nature of man, or, as in the terms already employed, "alien" and "wholly other." There can be no identification of the human and the divine.

This emphasis on the transcendent character of God is opposed, not merely to the more overt forms of humanism which we have noted, but also to idealism, as this term is technically used. For idealism, when it is not just a theory about physical objects, usually means that the clue to the ultimate nature of the universe is found in our reason. Reality, on this view, is an entirely rational system, and the nature of each part is determined by the "whole" or absolute to which it belongs. A sufficiently discerning mind could see the rational necessity for all that is; it could read the riddle of the universe in the tiniest part. But this raises two main difficulties for a religious view, neither of which has been successfully met by idealist writers. *Firstly*, it seems to cast doubt on the reality of finite life and the "distinctness of persons"; and if all is some phase of the absolute, how can there be room for suffering, error, and sin? Idealists have sought to cope with this problem by regarding all evil as good out of its place. But even if this could be done, the fact that there is maladjustment would remain to stain a universe supposed to be perfect throughout. The positive character of moral evil, evil which involves a deliberate choice of what we know to be wrong, seems particularly hard to accommodate within the idealist view, and although some prominent idealists have put considerable strain on their main assumptions in their anxiety to preserve the reality of moral struggle, the real drive of their arguments has been in the direction of presenting the adventures and hazards of the moral life as a mere appearance, even that being of course an uncertain solution of their problem—for the appearances do appear. A feature of this is the elevation of the community to the position of an entity more real than its individual members. But along with these doubts of the ultimacy of finite existence, and especially the threat to the finality of men's responsibility for their own actions, idealism also fails, in the *second place*, to account for the sense of God as a mystery, present to us indeed, but also altogether eluding our grasp and remaining essentially "alien" and "other." For idealism there is nothing in the nature of God which is not in principle present in the nature of man. The



## PHILOSOPHY

"Absolute" is the extension and perfection of the finite. When it is more than this, idealism has passed its bounds, as it tended to do very markedly in the case of Bradley.

The belief that the real is the rational goes back of course a long way. It began with the Greeks, and Parmenides was led by it to some very strange views of the universe. Plato, coming to the rescue of Parmenides and pointing the way out of some of his main difficulties, concluded that the nature of what is fully real is best discerned in mathematics; every truth depends on every other, and we are thus drawn away from the world of sensation and change to the contemplation of immutable principles. But if every truth is true because it belongs to a whole or system, we seem driven to the view that system presupposes system *ad infinitum*, and thus there is some incompleteness in the notion of a thoroughly rational universe. Plato was therefore led to the view that the supreme reality, the "Form of the Good," is "beyond being and beyond knowledge." This brought an important mystical element into his philosophy, and this accorded well with his character and that of Socrates. But it was a mysticism which took us altogether out of the world of experience. It allowed of no mediation, although it required an intellectual and moral discipline. And the theory and practice of mysticism, affected by Plato much more than is commonly realized, has followed that course in the main ever since. But what we really need is some way to lay hold on reality in its alien irreducible nature, but yet not taking us away from the world and the life that we know from day to day, a mystery which remains a mystery but does not entirely elude us, a "wholly other" which is at the same time "within."

Herein lies the special force of the recent emphasis on the transcendent character of God. But it is fraught with a very grave difficulty. For if we are not to reduce the idea of transcendence to some meaning which idealism might give it, it is hard to see how the transcendent can have any significance for us or enter into our experience. This seems to me much the hardest, as well as the most important, problem in the philosophy of religion. No answer to it seems possible until we have a clearer view of the nature of religious symbolism, and perhaps the most hopeful and revealing feature of philosophy to-day is the concentration on symbolic thinking. But we have to remember that there is a very sharp difference between symbolism in logic or mathematics or science and symbolism in art or religion. The former can be fully rationalized, for it is a shorthand for what could be presented, but of course not so revealingly, in much more complicated ways in ordinary terms. Some scientists and mathematicians will, no doubt, deny this, the former in particular hankering after some esoteric interpretation of atoms and electrons, etc., although these seem plainly convertible into pheno-

## MORALITY AND RELIGION

menalistic terms or statements of what can be observed in experience. But symbolism in art makes us aware of reality in some way quite different from normal observation and science. It is some kind of revelation and links up in this way with the distinctive problem of religion. When we have reflected further on the meaning of this sort of symbolism, we may be able to appreciate better how there can be a witness or revelation actually within our own experience of what is altogether beyond it.

But where this approach is not carefully followed, there remain the most serious pitfalls, created by the temptation to appeal wholly to special revelation. This is the course pursued by Barth and others of the so-called "Continental" school of theology. They deprecate any suggestion of a natural theology, and affirm that God is known only by the Scriptures, and by the Scriptures as they become the revealed word of God to each individual. The Divine message must be known immediately and has no echo in ordinary thought and experience. But this makes it extremely difficult, indeed quite impossible it seems to me, to give any content to the word of God. That appears to be the strait to which the Barthians in particular are reduced, but of course they cannot rest happily in it; for they wish also to give to God's revelation and to our thought about Him the content which religion has traditionally given to them. And so, to every question we may ask about God they have to answer "it is and it is not." God is omniscient, just, gracious, the Father, etc., but not in any ordinary meaning of these words, nor by analogy with their normal use. A special language seems to be coined in this way for religion, but it seems hard to see why we should retain for the purpose words which are already current in ordinary intercourse. To do so leads to the most astounding paradoxes and makes it extremely hard to comment on anything in Barthian theology or to criticize it. For that theology becomes so elusive, and so dangerously near to sheer prevarication that there does not seem to be any point at which we can firmly lay hold of it. And this seems, moreover, inevitable so long as we think of God as a truly transcendent Being and yet find no way in which He can be present in the common encounter of men in this world.

Just what is the function of reason and natural experience has never been properly clarified by Barthian theologians, although of late, taking alarm at the bankruptcy of their position and its negation of their own office, they have been more inclined to stress the task of reason as systematizer of what is given to us in the "Word of God." But even this concession—and slight though it is, it is rather apt to undermine the whole position—leaves our natural faculties so discredited that man can hardly look for substantial guidance about what he should be and do anywhere outside of special revelation.

## PHILOSOPHY

There seems to be no room, therefore, for ordinary ethical thinking, and the "Continental" theologians, however much they may have shunned the excesses of Barth in other regards (and lacked the consistency which underlies his paradoxes) have been very unfaltering in their denunciation of any autonomous ethics, that is of any ethics which is not immediately derived from religion or is not a part of revelation. How far this involves an open indifference to ethical questions is of course very hard to determine. In some cases it seems to carry with it the deepest concern about the way men should conduct themselves in this life. Barthianism, we should remember, is a "theology of crisis" and not of other-worldliness, its spirit is dynamic and not passive, and it came to birth in the upheaval of a world war and as a protest against the impotence of the churches. Nor will recrimination take us very far in mutual understanding. But the upshot of this peculiar type of transcendentalism is to bring ordinary ethical thinking into complete contempt and to dismiss it openly as "mere moralism," a term of abuse apparently coined for the purpose.

One curious argument has recently been used in support of complete reliance on special revelation for purposes of conduct, namely that it makes for unanimity and harmony. This seems to be just the reverse of the truth. For those who make an appeal to special revelation are notoriously at variance with one another and with their fellows generally. This is not surprising, for, while we normally seek to correct our ethical judgments by taking account of the views of others, the person who believes that he is directly guided by God is hardly likely to pay serious heed to what his neighbours think. Neither will he be ready to compromise and make the adjustments we normally consider necessary when we fail to reach agreement on ethical questions. How could he compromise, how could he feel other than bound to obey when he believes that his course is directly mapped out for him by God? Intolerance and persecution, often to the point of hideous cruelty, have therefore been the normal accompaniments of a complete reliance upon divine guidance. And, therefore, instead of making for harmony and patient understanding of one another's problems, the abjuration of ordinary ethical thinking in favour of reliance on immediate revelation, has just the reverse effect. It breeds dissent and encourages a fanatical dogmatism.

One hardly needs to pause here to indicate how serious this is bound to be at the present time. A successful issue to the crisis of Western Civilization, in its strictly ethical and political aspects, turns very largely on our ability to agree to differ in a spirit of mutual respect and to find ways of co-operating with those who are seriously at variance with ourselves on fundamental questions of principle. If we fail at this point our hopes of retaining the essentials of democracy

become very slender, and it might not be too grave a view to say that the survival of human society, in any form in which we have a serious interest to preserve it, is in the balance. This has been repeatedly stressed of late and is one of the main reasons why we regard our age as an age of crisis. Little would be gained here by adding to the grim warnings which have already been uttered with ominous unanimity by leaders of thought, and which may be echoed by any who give the slightest thought to the present plight of human society. Scientific progress has made the world so much more completely a single unit than ever before that tolerance and agreed methods of settling differences have become essential as never before for the peace and prosperity of mankind. This is why problems of peace and democracy are also problems of survival. It is, therefore, extremely distressing that the theological thinking which is, in one regard and that, religiously, the most fundamental, most alive and creative, and which is most effectively addressed to the deepest needs of men, should also encourage, in the social and political field, those very attitudes of opinionatedness and fanaticism which constitute at present the greatest immediate threat to civilization and which have already taken their heavy toll of human life and world resources in the course of two devastating wars.

It makes little difference here that the content of religious dogmatism is not likely to have much in common with the sort of political fanaticism which makes the individual to-day a prey to despotic movements. It avails little to denounce particular forms of tyranny if we make no effort to condemn and oust the spirit which makes it possible. Subservience and bigotry, the willingness to adhere blindly to doctrines which are never subjected to critical discussion, lose little of their inherently evil nature, and their power to harm us, when we vary the ends to which they are directed. It is the dogmatic spirit itself that is most injurious and hardest to counteract. And this is what makes it so exceedingly serious, in an age which has in so many ways an unrivalled opportunity for the spread of enlightenment and culture, that the main weight of religious thought should be thrown on the side of reaction and the barbarous dogmatisms which have found such fertile ground in the confusions and anxieties of an age of rapid progress and transition.

The assumption, moreover, that one has some infallible hold on the truth, even when that is most sharply opposed to the opinions of others, is itself a form of that spiritual arrogance which the theologians I have primarily in mind, in conformity with the main religious tradition of the past, have singled out for special condemnation. To suppose that we can set aside the age-long endeavour of men in the past to arrive at the truth, in pagan as in Christian communities, and proceed without regard to the experience accumulated by our

## PHILOSOPHY

fellows at the present time, is to ascribe to ourselves a position of quite unwarranted importance. And this seems especially evident when we remember the complicated social contexts in which we have to decide what is our duty. Those who uphold the privileges and responsibility of seeking to form an enlightened ethical opinion of our own, are often denounced as individualists by their opponents. But it seems to me that there can be no more vicious form of individualism than that which supposes that God has entrusted his message to each individual in a way which does not require the co-operation of other members of society for its full elucidation.

One must of course admit that a great many of the dissensions by which society is rent to-day could speedily be ended if there were more universal willingness to approach our differences in the spirit of true religion. And this is why religious leaders are apt to assure us that the first condition of social regeneration is spiritual conversion. But how far is conversion possible to those who do not address themselves seriously to practical problems? May not the preoccupation with personal conversion produce the spirit which makes religious rebirth peculiarly remote? One is reminded also of a penetrating observation of Mr. Basil Matthew's when he refers to "the not uncommon fallacy of saying that what we desire is a change of heart, while meaning that what we do not desire is a change of anything else." But setting these objections aside, and admitting, as, surely, those who have any appreciation of religious truth must admit, that to proceed in a spirit of Christian charity, especially if that were done on both sides of a controversy, would lead to a just and speedy solution of a host of practical problems, that is by no means the whole of the battle. For it seems evident that those who are already imbued with a spirit of Christian charity are likely to find themselves for a considerable time in a great minority in a world of bitter opposition and mistrust. And even if this were not the case there could still be a possibility of serious disagreement among the most truly Christian peoples. For a truly religious spirit is no guarantee of infallible knowledge of the facts on which our practical decisions must be based. Nor does it carry with it always the soundest appraisal of the facts. Honest and devout persons have also been frequently biased and affected by irrational considerations. To ensure the right religious attitude is thus no guarantee of unanimity in regard to practical issues. Nor is the spread of true religion ever likely to bring about conditions in which men will not be subject to moral perplexity and find themselves compelled to adjust their conduct to that of persons who are far from sharing their own convictions. Nor is this desirable, if life is to retain its savour, however great the need to overcome bitter dissension and malicious antagonism. But finally, and, for the present purpose most important of all, a spirit

of Christian trust and forbearance is hardly likely to be engendered when men turn away from rational consideration of one another's problems, and wrap themselves up in a cloak of spiritual self-assurance. Irritation and frustration are much more likely to ensue if we cultivate this attitude.

The Barthian may, of course, retort, at this point, that it is quite unfair to accuse him of encouraging overweening self-assurance. His intention, he will maintain, is quite the reverse, namely to encourage greater humility and to emphasize the complete dependence of man upon God. But does he not over-reach himself? For the upshot of his doctrine is to induce individuals to make what cannot fail to be a highly arrogant claim to an exclusive monopoly of truth, at least in some matters, even in defiance of quite contradictory opinions of other persons. And even if this attitude were not bound to carry with it smugness and contempt for the views of others, is it not a subtle form of inverted pride to disdain the exercise of ordinary human powers and to demand, in their stead, infallibility and a more immediate, but less exacting, access to the mind of God than appears to be vouchsafed normally to finite creatures.

A word may be interpolated here about the alleged sinfulness of pride to which such prominence is given in attempts to discredit the natural faculties of men. If any reliance on our own capacities is to be discouraged, then it would seem that joy in personal attainment must always be condemned; more bluntly, pride must be always and inherently sinful. But to maintain this, I submit, is nonsense. Pride in some forms is even a quality we ought to be at pains to cultivate. And we all of us do feel proud on some occasions without the slightest sense of impropriety or sinfulness. If one wins a race or comes out first in an examination, one is naturally and very properly proud, and we show that we do not consider this in any way reprehensible by proceeding to congratulate those who have had a marked success. Theologians have not been lacking in this grace; on the contrary they have been quite forward with praise and encouragement where deserved. Neither, be it said to their credit rather than maliciously, have they been indifferent to them themselves. It seems, therefore, very hard to maintain that natural pride is inherently evil. To have an exaggerated estimate of the importance of our own achievement is, of course, another matter, and to seek personal aggrandisement at the expense of others is clearly reprehensible. But there is nothing here to suggest that joy in the exercise of human powers and reliance upon them is inherently vicious.

I know that I shall be told here that my objection is very naive, and that it altogether misses the point of the theological doctrine. It is pleasing to know this, although it certainly will not hold true of the harsher and more uncompromising affirmations of the sinfulness

## PHILOSOPHY

of pride among prominent religious thinkers, not excluding some of the most notable of our contemporaries. For if the religious doctrine is put forward in a way which directly incurs the criticism made in the preceding passage, its advocates are really committed to quite impossible and ridiculous reactions. But if the doctrine is not to be taken in a literal sense, then how are we to understand it? As a sense of creatureliness in relation to the perfection of the Creator, we shall be told. But any sense of unworthiness of this sort which may be present in religious experience, carries with it no aspersion on the worthwhileness of marketing the talents which have been put in our keeping. We cannot at one and the same time consider it a duty to cultivate our powers and condemn the exercise of them. That is just downright contradiction which no peculiarity of religious truth can justify. And if the radical sinfulness of pride is not to be interpreted in the more obvious ways which I have noted, it is the duty of those who affirm it to take much greater pains to show just what it does mean. And they seem peculiarly reluctant to do so.

But to return to the main course of our discussion, it will be urged, in defence of the Barthian doctrine, that the reliance on special revelation is not to be understood as involving an aloof withdrawal of ourselves from the turmoil and perplexities of the present life into some exclusive inner sanctuary. Has not Barth himself quite explicitly condemned this sort of otherworldliness? Admittedly he warns us not to seek the divine message in the course of history as such. "Whoso says history, says non-revelation." But the "Word of God" comes to the individual in the agitation and stress of historical circumstances, in *crisis*. But if this means anything at all, it surely presupposes some appraisal of historical events which leads to the judgment that they are critical, when they are so. And if the divine message is addressed to man in a peculiar historical context, will it not also depend on a fair appreciation of the facts in a particular situation? But is that ever guaranteed? Will the most scrupulous honesty and the profoundest piety give us an infallible knowledge of matters of fact? Quite obviously not, and any doctrine which maintains that it does, condemns itself at the start. But if it be admitted, as it must, that religious persons, as much as any others, may be mistaken about matters of fact, then we seem bound to admit also that we may be mistaken about the course we should follow, unless it is maintained that we receive guidance in a way not related at all to the specific nature of the situations in which we find ourselves.

This comment of course implies that we never do know with absolute certainty what we should do. And it is uneasiness on this particular score that drives many persons to seek in religion an infallible guide. The advocates of the theory of special revelation refer often to our unhappy plight if we are not lifted out of "the

## PHILOSOPHY

harmful, shall I vote for this or that, shall I take part in war or become a conscientious objector? Such questions, sometimes more, sometimes less, important, confront us every day; they are of the very stuff of the moral life, and they are quite unavoidable. Just how are we to describe a claim which is over-ridden by another claim, is indeed a very difficult ethical problem which has been much discussed of late.<sup>1</sup> Is it proper to call such a claim a right—perhaps a *prima facie* right? But this is largely a matter of nomenclature. For it is something of an ethical nature that is being over-ridden in cases of this sort. And there seems to be no way, even if that were desired, in which human life would be possible without conflicts of this kind, leading in some cases to most painful decisions. And, again, a theory which disregards conflicts of this kind is turning away from the obvious facts of the human situation, the facts which give morality its meaning.

It has to be added that, when confronted with the sort of practical problem we have noted, we find ourselves subject to perplexity and error, we are not immobilized ethically. For, in the first place, we can continue our efforts to make our ethical judgments as sound as is possible. Our own fallibility does not affect the truth itself. There is a right and wrong to every situation, as every opinion must be true or false. And just as we can be "morally" or practically certain that some matters of fact are as we take them to be, so we can have all the certainty we need about a great many ethical questions. Where this is lacking there is often a reasonable presumption that we are right and when in serious doubt, there are open to us various ways of seeking to make our opinions sounder. Furthermore, even if we are in doubt or mistaken, we can always set ourselves to pursue the course which our consciences set before us as the most likely to be right. And when we have done this there is nothing more that we can do. Good men are always at one in the loyalty of each to his own ideal, but it is a great mistake to suppose that they must also be at one in their opinions about what is right. To require that is to rebel—may we not add, in a spirit of arrogance—against the conditions of finite existence, and to demand in ethics a royal road to truth which we would hardly expect to find elsewhere.

Much that is peculiarly instructive has been written about these matters by notable ethical thinkers of the present day, and the progress that has been made recently in ethics is one of the most distinctive and promising features of modern thought. But religious thinkers, in the main, have been curiously indifferent to these important advances in a field closely akin to their own. This is especially true of the Continental Theologians and the Neo-Protestant writers in general. For however we may finally view their central position, it

<sup>1</sup> Cf. E. F. Carritt, *Ethical and Political Thinking*, p. 3.



seems evident that many of the arguments to which they attach most weight themselves depend on assumptions which a little acquaintance with the recent clarification of ethical concepts would show to be very confused. But this failure to take account of matters which bear so closely on their own work, when these have been fully accessible and much publicised, affords further evidence of a lack of interest in the problems of practice which a somewhat too clamant disavowal of other-worldly preoccupation does little to dispel.

This bears on a further, and most important, feature of recent theological controversy, namely the assumption that there is no alternative to the theory of special revelation other than that of making ethical ideas dependent on the nature of man himself. This is perhaps the main weapon in the armoury of the Neo-Protestants. Dr. Camfield writes<sup>1</sup>: "How can a law which is rooted in man's nature be a real command? If the 'ought' is to be a genuine ought, it must come from without, it must command; it must be the word of a Lord; it must be given to man, and it must not be compromised by being changed, however circumspectly, into an 'is'." It is the Catholic doctrine of natural law that Camfield has before his mind in this passage, a doctrine which Barth himself treats with much respect as the main alternative to his own; and of this we shall have something to say later. But it is none-the-less evident how easy is the transition for Camfield from the rejection of any view which equates value with being, ought with is, to the assumption that "ought" has no significance except as the Word of the Lord—and the Word of the Lord, moreover, in the special sense that he gives to the term. The spectre of subjectivism is in this way constantly held before us. But the alternatives suggested are not, in fact, exclusive. There is a *third* possibility which will enable the moral life to escape complete absorption in religion without perishing in the swirls of subjectivism. And it is here that the course of recent ethics proves exceptionally helpful.

For although there is deep disagreement among moralists to-day about the meaning of conceptions like "ought" and "goodness," some very formidable arguments have been advanced against the attempt to define these conceptions in terms of some interest or reaction of our own. These arguments seem to me very sound, and I do not think they can be avoided by making goodness, for example, depend on some general nature of man, or "man as such," as idealist writers suppose.<sup>2</sup> But what is of most importance now is that it is possible to carry on this controversy without recourse to any

<sup>1</sup> *Reformation, Old and New*, p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. H. J. Paton, "The Good Will" and C. A. Campbell, "Moral and Non-Moral Values," *Mind*, Vol. XLIV.

## PHILOSOPHY

distinctively religious notions. For we can think of "ought" or "goodness" as unique non-analysable notions whose meaning we perceive directly by moral intuition and which do not require to be translated into terms of our own likes and reactions. This gives us a command which comes from without, but which is not peculiarly religious, and which does not require any religious belief or practice for its apprehension. The ablest recent protagonists of moral objectivity rarely, if ever, mention religion. And if it is argued, as is done by some religious writers,<sup>1</sup> that these refutations of subjectivism rest ultimately on some distinctively religious foundation, it is incumbent on those writers to show why this is the case when it is possible to make the refutations so effective without the introduction of any religious ideas.

The same point may be pressed by noting that we continue to regard those who have no allegiance to any religion as responsible as any other persons for their conduct. And this would be preposterous unless we credited those persons with an understanding of right and wrong, good and bad, which is not affected by failure to embrace a religious doctrine—much less the peculiar doctrines of Neo-Protestants. This does not by any means imply a complete divorce of ethics from religion. The refinement of ethical ideas usually comes from religious sources, and we have derived our noblest ethical ideals directly from religion. But this can well be allowed without any merging of ethics in religion. It is very natural that profound religious experience should carry with it a quickening of other faculties, and, in particular, of the moral consciousness. And morality in its turn, as we shall stress especially before the close, is essential for the continuance and deepening of religious awareness. But the fact remains that it is possible to be moral without being religious. To deny this is just perverse, for it is an assumption we make every day in our dealings with irreligious people among whom there are many for whom we must have the highest esteem. We may also bear in mind that there have been persons of a deeply religious nature, and some religious geniuses, in whom the flame of the moral life flickered very faintly, and others whose ideas of moral values were very distorted. Thus the normally close relation between ethics and religion appears to be by no means an invariable one. But what we have to emphasize here is that there can be no fusion of ethics and religion, and that it is quite possible, indeed most usual to-day, to appreciate moral distinctions and live a very moral life, without subscribing to religious beliefs or being touched by religion. This seems quite beyond dispute, and furthermore, those of us who do hold religious views could think them away without thinking away

<sup>1</sup> Cf. L. A. Reid, *The Rediscovery of Belief*, chap. ix.

our normal<sup>1</sup> obligations; in a godless universe it would still be wrong, for example, to be cruel. It seems evident therefore that ethical ideals cannot be regarded as immediate commands of God, and that they need not lose anything of their distinctiveness and objectivity when we turn away from religion. The alternative to the Barthian view, and the view which is shared in this matter by many others, namely that ethics has no significance apart from religion, is not, therefore, of necessity humanism or subjectivism. And it is hard to see how this can fail to be evident to any who deign to pay careful attention to the writings of those who have made the most successful recent attacks on ethical subjectivism.

The view that there can be no standards for the guidance of our conduct other than those which are immediately given us by God encounters yet graver obstacles in another regard. For it is not merely that doubt is cast on our ability to determine, without the immediate aid of God, what courses of action to pursue, but also that the very significance of the notions of right and value, as we normally think of them, is blunted. For the ultimate reason why the guidance of "natural" moral sense is distrusted is that ethical thinking as such is discredited. It thus seems impossible to retain any distinctively ethical conceptions, and the irreligious person, nay even a professedly Christian person who puts his trust in any human power in his usage of the notions of right and ought and value, becomes simply the prey of delusions. In this matter the scepticism of the Neo-Protestant is very complete; it brings him into the closest alliance with the nihilists. For the meaning is emptied out of most that we consider significant in our ordinary contacts, an accusation that could not be brought against the far less radical scepticism of the subjectivists.

This is reinforced in a further, and even more fundamental, distrust of human power. For, in stressing the dependence of man on God and seeking to avoid any humanistic account of the ministration of His grace, it comes to be assumed that the life of man is of no account except in the immediate impact of "the transcendent" upon it, the "wholly other" does not establish itself within the human context but annihilates it. The natural activities of man, as well as his understanding, are annulled as completely as in any nihilistic philosophy;<sup>2</sup> they are all struck out under the "hammer of God." God is all, man is nothing, and this is maintained, not as the reflection of certain religious moods, but as unqualified truth. In no

<sup>1</sup> There may of course be distinctive religious obligations, but that is quite another matter.

<sup>2</sup> One should note here also the close similarity between Barth's teaching and that of the vedantic writings. Cf. W. S. Urquhart, *Humanism and Christianity*, chap. vi.

## PHILOSOPHY

regard, therefore, does the effort of man himself avail him anything, if he is free it is only to discover his own impotence, to feel himself obliged and yet know that all attempts to discharge the obligation are essentially self-defeating. As Brunner puts it,<sup>1</sup> in a typical paradox: "My duty to do good is precisely the sign that I cannot do it. It is true, as Kant showed, following the Stoic line of argument, that the imperative of obligation is the principle by which I come to know my formal freedom, i.e. my responsibility. But it is at the same time—and no philosopher has recognised this—the ground on which I become aware of my lack of real freedom. For the good that I do, because I ought, is for that very reason not freely done, and therefore it is not really good." This contradicts all that we seem bound to think about duty, and the very conception of duty is altogether absorbed in a different religious conception. All that is left to man is to witness to, or, rather vaguely, to "mirror" "the right act of God,"<sup>2</sup> to be justified by his faith and yet know that the very acceptance of this justification, while it leads to good works (but by what standards?), is itself the gift of God, to know that, even here, "God himself is the agent."<sup>3</sup> "Every freedom," we are told, "other than that which is found in dependence upon God is illusion and slavery."<sup>4</sup> "Therefore faith also thus understood, is the end of all ethics."<sup>5</sup> For the obedience of faith comes not from the law, not from general principles, but from the address and gift of God alone. Therefore it is also the real good, because it is that which God does to us and through us, by His Word and His Spirit. For they who believe are led by the spirit of God. It is not that they *ought*, they *must*.<sup>6</sup> There is much that is obscure in doctrines of this kind, even when we view them in a religious rather than an ethical context; there is also confusion to which a corrective could be found in elementary ethical distinctions. In particular it is hard to see what significance "justification" can have if it does not presuppose any specifically ethical notions, and the relevance of the process of "justification," even when it is held, somewhat inconsequently it seems to me, that it leads to "good works," to the business of living from day to day is in no way evident. Nor does it seem possible to make these matters plainer without surrendering the initial assumptions about "special revelation" and man's dependence on God—is not that the essence of the rift between Barth and Brunner? But however we are to understand these doctrines, and whatever their importance in a properly religious reference, it seems that little, if anything, can be left of ethics to those who subscribe to them.

This cannot fail to have a peculiarly unfortunate effect at present.

<sup>1</sup> Brunner, *God and Man*, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Reformation Old and New*, Camfield, pp. 5 and 83.

<sup>3</sup> Brunner, *God and Man*, pp. 81.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 83.

<sup>5</sup> Italics, mine

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 85.

For it is hard to think of any age when there was greater need for men to lay hold very firmly on their ethical principles. It is a commonplace to note how easily the confidence of men, not merely in this or that particular ethical view, but in all morality, is undermined in periods of transition; these are the periods when selfishness is most swift to exploit the prevailing uncertainties, when honest doubt gives way to cynical opportunism. But how much more is this the case in times of tremendous upheaval like the present. The damage to the moral fabric of Western civilization is already recorded very grimly in the woeful pages of recent and contemporary history. Nor is it easy to determine whether private or public morality has received the greatest hurt. But these are matters too obvious to need to be laboured in this essay. What concerns us here is the support, no less powerful because unwitting, which the most influential and stirring religious thought of to-day inevitably gives to the moral nihilism by which society is so seriously threatened. Instead of looking to religion for moral stability, and for the refinement of the moral consciousness which we require to cope with new and bewildering problems in almost every sphere of interest, we have, for the most part, to consider how best to counteract the influence of religion itself.

It should be stressed here that the teaching to which I take exception is that which leaves its stamp most plainly at present on religious thought and practice in general, as well as on theological thinking. Evidence of this may be found in abundance in authoritative religious pronouncements such as the report of the Oxford Ecumenical Conference. Nor is the hurt to morality mitigated much by half-hearted formulations and illogical concessions to common sense. The strict Barthian, having the courage and consistency of his convictions, may do less harm in the long run. For his teaching, being less insidiously established in the midst of more rational doctrines, is less likely to receive wide endorsement and be perpetuated.

But the worst of it is yet to mention. For, as it is essential to take some account of natural human capacities, the more especially when it is held that man was originally created in the image of God, we are given the view that the mind and the will of man alike have suffered corruption in consequence of man's sinful rebellion against God. How exactly this conception is related to the original difficulties of the view that man, being finite, is yet aware of the infinite and in fellowship with that which transcends his own nature, is not made very plain. For it seems clear that, whatever our prospects of solving this fundamental problem of religious thought, its difficulties are such as appertain to the problem of truth and knowledge in ways which are not directly affected by moral considerations; and of this

## PHILOSOPHY

far too little account is taken in theological writings. But when recourse is had to the view that our natural powers are not to be relied upon in any way where ethical or religious insight is concerned, if indeed they should be trusted in any regard (but should we forswear them altogether?), because of the way man has sinfully alienated himself from God, then we seem committed to an extremely radical denunciation of human powers; they are not merely unreliable but *evil*.

It is this inherently evil character of human action that theologians have primarily in mind when they affirm that the very effort of man himself to do what is right is an expression of sinful pride. This is the main way in which it comes to be affirmed that man stands under the "condemnation" of standards with which it is impossible for him to conform, that, paradoxically, the "ought" is a sign of unfreedom. But the position is fraught with quite exceptional difficulties. For, apart from the matters mentioned in the preceding paragraph and earlier, it is hard to see what is the relation of the sinful rebelliousness of "man," and the evil which characterizes "the human situation" to the particular actions of each individual. On some views it is boldly declared that the Fall is "prior to any human action"; and of that I find it very hard to make the slightest sense; but it is hardly less difficult to see how there can be any wickedness which is not the specific wickedness of this or that man, but of an abstract humanity—at least if ethical conceptions retain anything of their ordinary meaning.

One consideration which is often urged in support of the view that human action is inherently evil is closely related to the matters we have discussed earlier, namely the admitted fallibility of the moral consciousness. Although we can have practical certainty in some regards that we are acting rightly, we can never be fully certain, and we are sometimes seriously in error. But, it is argued, if we can never know what is right we can never do what is right. And if we never do right our actions are always evil.

This argument is, however, highly fallacious. In the first place, although we have no absolute assurance that our action is right, we are by no means subject to unmitigated ignorance. There is the presumption that the greater part of our ethical judgments are sound, and that, therefore, in obeying them, we have acted rightly. There is thus much to be put to the credit side.

But, secondly, it has to be stressed that no one is morally to blame for what he does in ignorance. On the contrary, if he is loyal to the duty that presents itself to him, his conduct, albeit misguided and harmful, may be very worthy of praise. This is the main point of the distinctions which have figured so prominently in recent ethics, the distinction between what is objectively right and what is right in the

## MORALITY AND RELIGION

subjective or "putative sense,"<sup>1</sup> and the closely connected distinction between "the worth of the agent" and "the rightness of the act." Reflection on these distinctions will help to make it plain that moral ignorance is not itself morally evil nor any direct indication of moral evil. That it is evil in other ways need not be denied; so is lack of aesthetic taste. Of these two moral ignorance is more to be deplored, both in itself and for its effects. But the two have this in common, that, however they may grieve and distress us, the question of blame (and the special sort of praise which is correlative to blame) does not arise in respect of them at all. Ignorance may of course be due to neglect in the past or to failure to take sufficient pains to discover where our obligations lie. Conscience needs to be cultivated, and it is also apt to be blunted when its behests are set aside. But when this happens, it is for our neglect in the past or for some similar wilful lapse which has caused us to have a faulty judgment now, and not for anything which now proceeds from our own ignorance, or for the ignorance itself, that we are to blame. If we disregard this we shall find ourselves in very queer straits, as men have often done in the past. For we shall find it impossible to dispute about ethical matters without immediately calling one another to account. Controversy has often been embittered in that way to the ruin of tolerant and patient solution of complicated questions. Nor is it easy to avoid that in practice, for denunciation of persons and opposition to policy are very apt to go together. But we know, when we think about the matter, that they ought to be sharply distinguished, and that political and social problems would offer much better prospect of solution if we did so. It is widely acknowledged, at least where democratic principles survive, that an opponent must be respected as a person, however deluded and mischievous his view, and however severe the measures we must take against him, provided we are sure that he holds to his way with honest intention. We can conclude therefore, that defective ethical judgment is no direct indication of an evil will. And even if it were, we should be still far from proving that men's actions are invariably and essentially evil. For, as I have stressed, there are sound as well as erroneous ethical judgments.

The seriousness of spreading the view that men's actions are essentially corrupt can hardly be exaggerated. For to encourage so gloomy and distorted a picture of human nature is plainly not conducive to the vigorous effort required to establish society again on a firm foundation after its recent upheaval. Yet this is in fact, not merely the incidental result of much contemporary Christian teaching, but its open aim. It is not merely that we are cautioned not to take too utopian and unrealistic a view of our immediate prospects, a wise if somewhat unnecessary counsel, but, rather, that the dis-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. E. F. Carr, *Ethical and Political Thinking*, chap. II.

## PHILOSOPHY

paragement of all thought of progress and the inculcation of utterly despondent views of all human endeavour, the representation of history as a series of inevitable and cumulative disasters, is considered an essential preparation for the utter reliance of the individual on divine grace and guidance thought to be required by religion. And of the ill-effects of this sort of teaching at the present critical juncture in the history of man it is hardly possible to speak too severely.

Moreover, by obliteration of all ordinary ethical distinctions and the merging of all wicked actions in some communal guilt or "universal sinfulness of man," we encourage reactionary tendencies in another way. For we give endorsement immediately to the crude and barbarous doctrines of collective responsibility which identify the individual very completely with a group or society. To weaken the sense of personal responsibility in this way is a peculiarly grave disservice to society at present. And no one who has viewed the course of recent social and political disorders with a glimmer of understanding can fail to appreciate this. Extensive, almost unqualified, collectivism seems to be the barbarous alternative to a successful issue to the crisis of civilization. And they build strangely who bring religious forces to its support.

Encouragement is also given to reaction when the repudiation of ordinary ethical conceptions takes away the basis for criticism of accepted standards and the limitation of State and other public enactments. For the notion of "justification" is too vague and too uncertainly related to specific problems to provide any alternative. The history of the Lutheran Church, especially in recent years, fully bears this out. And so do the statements of leading Neo-Protestant writers, for they take little pains to disguise their counsel of complete submission to "powers that be" in all matters except those which directly concern the preaching of "justification." Dr. Urquhart points out that Barth himself has modified his attitude a little in this regard. Barth had formerly taught: "The Church's proclamation cannot permit . . . a question as to whether it is making the necessary contribution towards the preservation or even to the overthrow of this or that form of society or economy. A proclamation which takes up responsibility in these or similar directions spells treachery to the church and to Christ Himself. It only gets its due if sooner or later its march is stopped by some kind of delicate or brutal godlessness."<sup>1</sup> He now declares: "What is a choice of faith, if it never becomes a political choice? And what is the choice of faith to-day if in this thing it never becomes *this* political choice?"<sup>2</sup> But this is still highly ambiguous. A much more complete repudiation of Barth's earlier

<sup>1</sup> *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> *The Church and the Political Problem*, p. 58.



attitude is needed, including a clear admission that there is a Christian obligation to interfere in secular matters independently of their immediate effect on the teaching and practice of religion. Barth justifies his former attitude by noting that "the political experiment of national socialism had to be given its chance to declare what was in it," but "it has now disclosed itself as an out-and-out rival to Christianity. . . . It cannot be regarded as simply a "higher power" to which we must be obedient so long as we are in the world. It has shown itself to be a rival "religious institution of salvation." So writes Dr. Urquhart.<sup>1</sup> But this is a very inadequate defence. For Hitlerism was oppressive, not merely as a rival institution of salvation, but because of inhuman practices and oppression whose character was obvious long before the Lutheran churches decided that National Socialism was also a rival in the strictly religious field.

There are, however, matters to be put to the credit side of these doctrines. And among them is the consistency and ruthlessness with which they develop the implications of positions to which Christians commonly subscribe without fully appreciating whither they lead. This gives Neo-Protestant theology peculiar importance, for, in this way, it has helped to clarify fundamental issues and bring them to a head in a fashion which may well make the present period, in this as in other respects, a turning point in the history of theological thinking. This seems especially clear with regard to the Catholic doctrine which the Barthians usually take to be the main alternative to their own view. That doctrine is based on the ultimate identity of being and value, and thus involves the notion of "natural law" by which ethical standards are derived from the nature of man himself, the Aristotelian notion of good as end or purpose being here followed very closely. But this, as has already been stressed, does not give us a truly objective standard. Neither has it room for freedom of choice, in spite of the prominence most commendably given to that principle in Catholic theology. For it is implied that man is bound to act in conformity with certain ends. Furthermore, Catholic theology retains within a restricted sphere, or as the completion of the theory of natural law, ideas of special revelation and grace substantially the same as those of the Lutheran. This involves it in a fundamental dualism and leads to the representation of "natural law" as only "relative" and not absolute, relative, moreover, not merely in the sense that it is the best compromise possible in the circumstances, but also, and primarily, in the sense of being inherently imperfect. This latter supposition is bound up with ideas of the Fall and of man's "tainted" nature which makes it very hard to stop short of the Barthian denunciation of all ethics which is not

<sup>1</sup> *Humanism and Christianity*, p. 125.

## PHILOSOPHY

strictly theological. Here, as in the controversy with those liberal Protestant theologians who make concessions to traditionalist or "orthodox," doctrines, the Barthian has the best of it in point of consistency, however greater the violation of ethical principles. It seems therefore that Neo-Protestant theology has done us the great service of bringing all these matters to a head and showing that there is no middle position between the complete absorption of ethics in religion, with all the consequences we have described, and the full admission of the autonomy of ethical ideas and of man's independence in making his moral choices.

The clear affirmation of these latter principles seems to me to be as essential for religion as for ethics, and to be peculiarly important at present. For the drift of the masses away from religion in those countries where Christianity was most firmly established, is due, in no little measure, to the adherence of the Churches to doctrines which it becomes increasingly hard for anyone with an open mind to accept or to treat with seriousness, so repugnant are they to our understanding and moral sense. In some cases, indifference and contempt gives way to sharp opposition, not without some justification in view of the support which religion tends to give at present to reactionary forces. There can be no effective "recall to religion," and indeed the very attempt may defeat itself, until we take bolder steps to discard those doctrines which are quite unacceptable to our moral consciousness.

But that is not the main point. The main point concerns the peculiar achievement of the new Protestant theology in making us more aware of the need for infusion into the ages of enlightenment of a sense of reality as "wholly other" and not to be dissolved into the categories of our own thought. The appeal to special revelation will not, I am sure, avail here. The divine must be laid hold upon within a properly human context and in the fullness of the life of man. But Protestant thought is none-the-less truly prophetic, both in its accent and in its message, in its urgent insistence upon our need to raise ourselves to a new level of spiritual life by deepening our sense of "The transcendent nature of God." But this very aim is itself defeated at the start when the moral life is weakened. For it is just in that discipline of the moral life which is quite unlike that of any other experience that the soul is most surely turned outward from itself to the awareness of a reality which impinges upon it without a surrender of its own character and complete externality. If, therefore, we are to meet the challenge of our time, and if the urgent cry of our religious writers is not to go unregarded, we need above all to raise the prestige of morality and to inculcate in men generally a more vigorous straining after high ideals than at any time in the past. For the same reason, the crucial question for the Churches is

## MORALITY AND RELIGION

that of the relevance of the ethical teaching of the Christian religion to the problems of to-day. This they are far from tackling as they should, and if they defer much longer, the opportunity, so far as they are concerned, may well be lost altogether. But this I will not amplify at the moment. Suffice it to insist that, although religious thought to-day shows us so surely what is the real malaise of Western Civilization, its achievement will have been in vain if, in its own teaching or in the attitude of the churches, the vitality of the moral life is sapped.

# A CHALLENGE TO PHILOSOPHERS IN THE ATOMIC AGE<sup>1</sup>

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PHILOSOPHY, I know, is *philosophia perennis*. A "dated" philosophy, therefore, would appear almost to amount to a contradiction in terms. In this sense the "challenge" implied by the title of this paper seems out of place. A challenge to philosophers—well, perhaps. But a challenge to philosophers in the atomic age (or, for that matter, in any specific age)—no!

In general such an objection is well taken. But we are, of course, never confronted with a situation "in general," but always with a very specific—and to-day, moreover, with a *unique*—situation. It is a situation which has changed radically even since the close of official hostilities at the so-called end of World War II. True enough, the history of the two world-wars had already brought home to us the fact that, with the accelerating development of applied science and technology, wars were rapidly approaching a tremendous scale of destructive power. Thus it became difficult to imagine any possibilities of still more powerful implements of devastation.

But one's pious hopes at this point are like those of the famous Swedish scientist and inventor, Alfred B. Nobel. Having invented the process of making dynamite, he is said to have prophesied that his invention would make wars on any large scale hereafter impossible because of the terribly destructive power of his new invention! All of us have lived through the years which have been the death-dealing refutation of such a naive notion.

We know to-day that none of the weapons of destruction used by any portion of mankind, until that bomb dropped on Hiroshima in August 1945, was in any way comparable to the weapons which the atomic age possesses. Instruments of atomic, bacteriological, biological, and climatological warfare have been invented (and are now in production in more countries than one) which *can* make an end, not merely of the civilizations of both the Orient and the Occident, but of the very life and existence of the human race on this planet. In other words, for the first time since the dawn of man, man has now in his hands and in his unbridled power the implements of his own annihilation. It is the uniqueness of *this* circumstance

<sup>1</sup> Paper read at the Xth International Congress of Philosophy, Amsterdam, Netherlands, August 11-18, 1948.

## PHILOSOPHERS IN THE ATOMIC AGE

which radically differentiates to-day's situation from the human situation "in general," and therefore justifies even a philosopher issuing a challenge to his colleagues dictated *not* by events which can be universalized, but by the uniqueness of this new atomic age.

Philosophers are nothing, if they are not reflective thinkers. Nor does this challenge contemplate asking philosophers to "change their spots." Rather, it is merely an attempt to call philosophers' attention to the fact that, since "new occasions teach new duties," and "time makes ancient good uncouth," they cannot well afford to turn aside from what is perhaps *the* imperative task of the hour for reflective thinkers: the task, namely, of bringing to bear upon the existing human plight the best thinking of which the human mind is capable; nor to resign themselves to the notion that such may go on within the very narrow and limited confines of each philosopher's peculiar "ivory tower"; but rather that—in such an hour as to-day—it becomes the unquestionable moral obligation of the philosopher to attempt to make his impact not merely upon society at large (and still less in the minute), but even upon the heads of state and all those who hold, within the hollow of their hands and their selfish nationalistic appetites, the fate not only of nations but perhaps of all mankind.

An ambitious project this? Yes, of course. But, in the light of the shrunken size of our earth and confronted by the threatening dangers, this project is no more ambitious than was that of Plato, when he undertook to translate into factual political activity—in the State of Syracuse—the best his mind had been able to achieve by way of reflective thinking concerning the nature of man, the nature of the state, and the actual achievement of human welfare (as he saw it) through the operation of political activity. Neither Moscow nor Washington are as far removed geographically from Amsterdam to-day as was Syracuse from Athens in Plato's day.

What is here being called for is not the writing of some more Platonic "Republics," More's "Utopias," St. Augustine's "Cities of God," or any other phantasies of the ideal state. Such philosophic contemplations have their rightful place, no doubt. But as blue-prints of achievable society, at any specific time and place in history, they appear to have been worse than just worthless: at certain points they have proved to be positively misleading (we need merely be reminded of the fact that much of the position of the so-called "ideal state" pictured by Plato in *The Republic* actually came fairly close to fitting into the concept of the totalitarian state).

The proposal I should like to offer is both far less ambitious than such a blue-print and also far more ambitious (depending largely upon one's point of view). It is *less* ambitious in the sense that it would appear that the pressing exigencies of to-day's factual situation

## PHILOSOPHY

hardly make this a time for utopian dreaming or even for the most imaginative creative inventions of some ideal future state. It is *more* ambitious in the sense that what is in mind here is not merely realizable and realizable during our own life-time, but it seems fairly clear that, unless something like it becomes accomplished within a reasonably short time, we shall not merely have failed our age in our capacity as philosophers, but our own and our fellowmen's annihilation will spell out the doom of our failure in a fashion which will need neither explanation nor interpretation. In other words, if philosophers around the world would only now apply their ability to think reflectively, critically, scientifically, and constructively and also would make felt their influence as leaders of thought, there might still be time to stop humanity in its present insane march to and over the edge of the abyss before it is too late.

In this tragic hour the philosopher would seem to have at least three essential duties to fulfil. He needs, in the first place, to help lead men back to *reason* and to the use of rationally reflective intelligence in every area of life and thought, and more particularly in those areas where our present blind commitment to emotional nationalisms and equally blind super-sensitivity to economic, social, and political ideologies is bringing humanity into head-on collision with itself. The philosopher needs, in the second place, himself to acknowledge and then also to help human beings everywhere on earth to learn to recognize the fundamental and scientifically established fact of the basic unity of all mankind. If, in addition to these two needs, the philosopher will, in the third place, help men everywhere to discover and act upon the principle of the ultimate dignity of man (of every man on this planet), he will have made the largest possible contribution he can make, as a reflective thinker, to meeting the incalculable needs of this particular hour.

Let us have a brief look at each of these three in turn.

### I. BACK TO REASON!

Inasmuch as the philosopher is universally admitted to be the reflective thinker, this first demand for a return—or, perhaps, better a marching ahead—to reason would almost seem to be superfluous or at best a work of supererogation. Unfortunately, however, the matter is not as simple as that. The present all too widespread cults of irrationalism are by no means limited to non-philosophical circles or minds. In fact, the philosophy of irrationalism is by no means the contradiction in terms—in point of historical factuality—which it really ought to be. The appeal to super-reason—if not, indeed, to un-reason itself—is by no means unknown among even twentieth-century philosophers. This fact is not merely deplorable; it may

## PHILOSOPHERS IN THE ATOMIC AGE

actually be at least *one* of the contributing elements which have permitted our own age to sink so unspeakably low in practice. For, when practical affairs lose the directing hand of rational intelligence, it becomes difficult to see what other guide-posts man is to follow. This is not to deny either the validity or the importance of the emotions. Not at all. A philosophy which would overlook the far-reaching power of man's emotional drives would be unrealistic and worthless indeed. But it is one thing to admit not merely the significance and validity but also the tremendous power of the emotions in conduct, and a very different matter to accept these powerful drives themselves as guides. It is this latter folly which does all the damage. A steamship without any or with badly crippled engines could easily become the prey of the fury of winds and waves. But a steamship with even the most powerful engines, yet lacking any and all rudder and steering-apparatus, without compass, maps, or captain would certainly be doomed to shipwreck. And what ship-builder would be so foolish as to put the engines on the captain's bridge and the captain and compass in the hold of the boat?

Yet this latter procedure is exactly what is involved in all the irrationalisms which are not merely rampant but dominant in the life of individuals and of society to-day. The individuals who suffer shipwreck on the ocean of marriage because of the proverbial blindness of "love" are in exactly the same type of situation as are the nations who suffer shipwreck because of the blindness, arrogance, and foolishness of equally blind nationalism. And, in an age which recognizes and is aware of the scientifically demonstrable fact of the basic unity of all mankind, nationalism (not nationality!) is irrational. An age of growing nationalism, therefore, is an age of increasing irrationalism. Even religion itself can be dangerously blind when it allows itself to be led by mere emotion and thus becomes an exceedingly strong ally of whatever modes of irrationalism may, at any particular time and place, be in vogue.

Just as there is no adequate substitute for a captain (or First Officer), who knows his ship, his compass, his sea-lanes, his destination, and the best routes to get his ship to its intended destination, so there is no substitute for reason and intelligence as a guide to life. The writer is a relentless opponent of a mere "scientism"—as, indeed, he is an avowed foe of materialism—but he objects to this opposition being used as an excuse for being *unscientific* in any area or realm where science can be helpful and where scientific facts and scientific accuracy can not merely be obtained, but need very much to be used. Irrationalism is a form of obscurantism, which needs to be recognized as such wherever it occurs, regardless of how pious, powerful, or persuasive may be its sponsors.

Granting to M. Bergson, at the more specifically philosophical

level, many—if not, indeed, all—of his strictures against science, against the scientific method, and against analytical reason, it would still remain true that, in the final analysis, even M. Bergson made his ultimate appeal to the rational intelligence of his readers, whenever his appeal did not remain at the level of pure emotional agreement. It may also be granted that both science and the speculative (discursive) reason falsify, so far as so-called totality or universality are concerned, since they are not capable of grasping everything (all of totality, that is to say) at once. On second thought this (so-called) shortcoming of science and of reason is nothing more than a shortcoming which they share with the nature of man himself. After all, man is *not* God; he is a finite creature (*not* the infinite Creator). As such, not merely science and reason, but *all* of man's faculties, capacities, and functions partake of the finiteness of his essential nature. Hegel may, perhaps, have been correct in his assertion that "the truth is the whole." Only, in that case, it needs to be added that the Truth is *not* for finite man; for no finite man (not even Hegel himself!) can see, witness, experience, or even imagine "the whole."

It may be one of the philosopher's tasks *par excellence* to try to see things more nearly "whole" than does any specialist. But this distinctly and uniquely philosophical task does not justify the philosopher in giving up the best and most intelligent reason of which he is capable and surrendering to this, that, or the other kind of emotional spree; be this spree on behalf of personal, national, religious, or any other kind of special pleading.

Just because the philosopher is—supposedly—the user and advocate of reflective reason *par excellence*, and just because our age is so full of irrationalisms of every kind, it would now seem of the utmost importance that he should lead humanity back to that universally valid and necessary rational intelligence, without the wide and intelligent use of which it would appear hopeless to attack the tremendous tasks now facing all humanity.

Permit me to put it very bluntly indeed. It should be clear to any thoughtful mind that without the use of rational intelligence it is futile to expect either individuals or nations, religions, or races to find any common ground upon which they can meet and whence they can at least *begin* to work on the task of composing their differences. And who is there, if not the philosopher, who can be relied upon to point the way to the use of such rational intelligence?

It may be a platitude to assert that our differences become tragic precisely at the point where they are reinforced by emotional passion. But, platitude or not, everyone who has carefully and critically observed people in action, knows that this is true. At the level of highly emotionally charged nationalisms, racialisms, religiosity, and economic determinism (of either extreme), it is hopeless to expect



## PHILOSOPHERS IN THE ATOMIC AGE

any composing of fundamental differences in points of view, in devotion and commitment. The common denominator has first to be found at another level of human experience.

And, although it must be admitted that reason and rational intelligence are woefully weak when in conflict with basic emotional passions, devotions, and commitments, it is also difficult to deny that, when reason itself can appeal to the emotions involved, on the ground of demonstrable and undeniable facts and logical coherence, it is still possible to halt, to sway, yes, even to change the directions of the emotions into new channels where, instead of being destructive, they may be put to constructive use.

Let us be still more explicit. Even the constantly increasing emotional tension between Soviet communism in the East and American capitalism in the West might possibly find a basis for mutual respect—instead of steadily growing antagonism—if, on the one hand, each side could be made to see, on the basis of the known facts concerning atomic, biological, bacteriological, and climatological warfare, the certainty of an almost complete wiping out of *both* civilizations (if those weapons are used in any eventual World War III, as they most assuredly will be, if such a war is allowed to occur); and on the other hand, that absolutely no good for either side can come out of a continuation of steps and procedures which, as they now exist and keep continuing, can only lead to World War III. An appeal to reason, in this present world crisis, would, therefore, also be an appeal to self-interest, and, correspondingly, to the emotions themselves.

Moreover, inasmuch as reason constitutes one of the chief means of communication among men, it should not be difficult to see that it furnishes one of the major methods of composing differences which are the result of conflicting value-judgments. Reason, that is to say, is one of the chief instruments for achieving agreement or at least working solutions to problems of value-conflicts.

Is it not possible for philosophers in every land to help their fellowmen now to find the way back to such simple reasonableness as will enable mankind at last to bethink itself of its fundamental hithright and to learn to live together in amity—without requiring of any others that, in order to live peacefully on the same planet with us, they will have to live or to think as we do?

Or, better; can philosophers—now—do *less* than that?

## II. THE UNITY OF MANKIND

The philosopher's second duty, in a most significant sense, grows directly out of the first. For one of the major demands of reason, in an era of scientific achievements, is certainly a respect for and

## PHILOSOPHY

recognition of scientific facts. And it is most certainly a scientifically undeniable fact that *humanity*, in the final analysis, is *one*. It is a demonstrated biological fact that the various *types* of human blood are each and all of them found among any and all races, nations, classes, and groups of human beings. There is no such thing as Negroid blood, for example. Modern laboratories have now shown the truth of St. Paul's statement nineteen centuries ago: "God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth" (Acts 17: 26). Unfortunately, not merely the rulers of peoples and the perpetrators of racial myths, but even philosophers and theologians appear, at times, to have forgotten this fundamental scientific fact.

The scientific fact of the biological unity of the race must be made a philosophical and social doctrine of first-rate importance. Philosophers, scientists, theologians, and social scientists must unite in their insistence upon the scientific validity of this simple—and yet, in terms of practical consequences, very far reaching—fact. The various myths of racial and national superiority, which, after all, were not originally invented by Hitler and his Nazis, but can be traced through long centuries of history, could never have been taken very seriously nor have persisted, if men had universally been taught the basic fact of the ultimate unity of the human race. After all, the division of humanity into Nordic Aryans on the one hand and all other human beings on the other, is not very greatly different from the historic division of humanity into Greeks and barbarians or into Jews and Gentiles, etc., etc. All such divisions seem to originate, in the first instance, in an all too universal notion—(no matter how scientifically mistaken)—which places all people who belong to *my* particular group into one (and, of course, always the *superior*) category and all *other* human beings, who do *not* belong to *my* particular group, into another (and, of course, *inferior*) category. It is what modern social scientists have come to refer to as the "we—they" division. Such division is not only always fraught with danger but is, from a basically scientific point of view, false.

It is not the intention of the writer to assert that there are not wide differences among individual human beings. But these variations are to be found among all men everywhere, rather than in basic biological differences among races, nations, or classes. From the standpoint of basic *scientific* facts, for example, there is far more difference between an American *woman* and an American *man* than there is between a Russian woman and an American woman. Yet, in spite of the so-called and often referred to "war between the sexes," men and women have not found it either necessary or even advisable to go out and kill each other off. On the contrary, the very differences between the sexes have been a major factor in making each attractive

## PHILOSOPHERS IN THE ATOMIC AGE

to the other. But, of course, fortunately *both sexes* are *human*. And so are Russians and Americans, Frenchmen and Germans, Chinese and Italians, Hindus and Africans, Australians and the Islanders of the Seas. In fact, each and all of these are not merely human, but perhaps—to use a famous Nietzschean title—"all too human"; though it may with perhaps just as much justification be said of all of them that they are also "not yet human enough." But certainly *human*.

If philosophers could now capitalize upon this ultimate unity of the human race, in co-operation with biologists, anthropologists, and other social scientists, they might again be able to help stem the growing tide of racialism, nationalism, religious provincialism, bigotry, and all other efforts which labour to divide humanity.

It is not claimed that there is anything particularly new in this suggestion. It must merely be insisted that to-day, above all times, it has become imperative that these scientific facts be kept in constant view. For the two world wars already behind us, as well as the third one looming ahead, ought to have made it abundantly clear to every observing student of men that this scientific platitude of the unity of the human race cannot possibly be broadcast anywhere on earth with too great emphasis. Science attests to the fact of this ultimate unity; reason acknowledges it; and reason furthermore demands that it be proclaimed. Philosophers, who, I suppose, are human too (at least part of the time), dare not waylay their mission at this crucial point in these critical times.

### III. THE ULTIMATE DIGNITY OF MAN

Under the impact of man's growing conception and understanding of the unimaginable vastness of the universe, it has become rather fashionable in recent years to minimize the meaning and significance of man. Man, recognizing himself as a tiny speck of helpless matter on a third-rate planet of a tenth-rate solar system drifting aimlessly in an endless cosmic ocean, is supposed to be aware of his relative insignificance and meaninglessness. In comparison to the vast universe, he no doubt does appear as a pebble on the beach. This, certainly, is one view of man, and a view, moreover, against which it would be difficult to marshal many scientific facts.

However valid is that view of man, it is by no means the only *factual* view. There are also other established principles which make possible another outlook. In fact, this little speck of protoplasm on this third-rate planet, etc., etc., when viewed from a different vantage-point, appears all the more significant. For the tinier he is in material size when compared with the universe, the more miraculous he must appear to himself when he contemplates *his* ability to

## PHILOSOPHY

think of, measure, and comprehend the immensity of that universe, not to speak of his practically limitless capacities for invention and creation in innumerable areas. Be this as it may—and in any case I am not here concerned with this aspect of the problem—the fact remains that even the author of the classic debunking of man in the twentieth century, namely Bertrand Russell (in his essay on "A Free Man's Worship"), cannot refrain from declaring that "in all things it is well to exalt the dignity of man." Why?

Is it not because man, being what and who he is, is essentially the kind of entity who feels this dignity both within himself and also as present in all other human beings? Or is it not true that when we find human beings who behave in a fashion which we think unworthy of a human being, we almost inevitably sense that humanity itself has been degraded? We sense it as a slander against humanity itself. Somehow we are almost instinctively driven to recognize this fundamental sense of dignity in man. We may call it the result of over-estimation or of self-esteem, but the idea remains that this is the way self-conscious man feels about himself and about all others of his species whom he acknowledges as essentially human.

How beautifully this fact is illustrated precisely in its breach! Whenever, as the result of whatever factors, a man or a group of men treats another man or group of men in what we call "inhuman" fashion, such other men or groups are almost always thought of and referred to as somehow not quite up to the human level. To the Greeks, for example, the "barbarians" were less than "human." So also the gentiles to the ancient Hebrews. The attitude of recent German Nazism towards Jews and other so-called "lesser breeds" represents exactly the same attitude. Nor was the attitude of vast numbers of Americans towards the Japanese during World War II very different. Each of these groups thought of the *other* group as somehow not quite up to the standard of humanity. And, of course, we dare not forget that this has been the age-long attitude of U.S. Southern whites towards the Negro, and I fear still is to a far greater extent than most Americans would care to admit.

At this point the philosopher's *second* and *third* duties come close to meeting, if not, indeed, overlapping. If science has now unequivocally demonstrated the truth of the basic unity of the human race and has proved that there is no such thing as a "superior" race (or an inferior race either, for that matter), then this almost instinctive regard for the essential dignity of the human person belongs rightfully to every human being everywhere. It is true that specific acts or conduct engaged in by some particular human being or group of persons may be subject to severe criticism or even to outright condemnation as "not worthy of man." But, in the first place, even such action or behaviour cannot take away from the perpetrators of

## PHILOSOPHERS IN THE ATOMIC AGE

the action the fact that they are still, after all, human beings and, as such, entitled to the respect due to human beings, though the specific conduct itself may be ever so reprehensible. And, secondly, one cannot forget that even the Nazarene called upon all bystanders with his challenge: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone," without finding a single taker for his challenge from that day to this. If an act unworthy of man were to condemn any man to complete loss of human dignity, to loss of all self-respect as well as of the respect of his fellows, I fear we should all be in a very bad way indeed. In fact, if this were the case, what could be said even for humanity in the large? In the light of the thousands of years during which families, clans, tribes, cities, nations, and races have engaged in killing each other off by the almost universally approved method known as "war," what becomes of man's dignity in view of Thomas Jefferson's famous remark to the effect that "only mankind has sunk lower than the beasts of prey, going out killing off their own kind"? The writer happens to agree with Jefferson's judgment at this point. Yet, even such sinking to a level "lower than the beasts of prey" cannot remove the basic fact of man's need for and right to dignity and respect. The deed, no doubt, is to be condemned as "not worthy of man as a human being"; the method of trying to settle differences of opinion or even of living or of economics or of government by recourse to mass-murder certainly cannot be condoned as either rational, reasonable, or human. But, though deed and method are reprehensible and as such must be condemned, the doers of those deeds and the users of that—completely irrational—method are still human beings and, as such, still deserve respect and consideration: to rob them of their sense of dignity on top of everything else would be actually worse than the doing of those immoral deeds or the practice of that irrational method.

However, there is no need to elaborate this point before a congress of philosophers. Since at least the day of the doctrine of "natural rights," philosophers have been thoroughly conversant with the *underlying reasons for the claim to human dignity as well as with the demands for the "rights of man."* But it is no small achievement that we have lived to see the day when not philosophers, but politicians and rulers have seen the need and requirement implied in this concept of the dignity of man sufficiently to have appointed one of the major commissions of the United Nations to draft a document on "The Rights of Man" everywhere where men are found. (The question of the validity of the doctrine of "natural rights" as an acceptable ethical theory is not an issue here, one way or the other.)

Surely, in the light of this, one of the major hopeful signs on the whole present horizon, it becomes all the more incumbent upon philosophers that they shall take their own rightful place among the

## PHILOSOPHY

leaders of men in helping humanity to achieve both ends: (1) by issuing a *statement* of humanity-wide import, asserting and insisting upon man's fundamental dignity; and (2) by indicating the type of *action* and *conduct* by men everywhere necessary to implement the verbal statement in every-day life and practice.

That this human dignity involves the basic right of men to be free, in the best and widest possible sense of this word (in so far as it can be squared with that aspect of material and social determinism which Spinoza already saw so clearly), would seem hardly disputable or questionable. That men must be assured of such freedom everywhere on this planet—in so far as this can be achieved or aided by philosophers—would seem to be a *sine qua non* of real human dignity. But that such freedom does not merely imply freedom of speech and expression, freedom of assembly and of discussion, freedom of religion and of worship, but also freedom to work, to earn, to create, and to achieve, as well as freedom from crippling economic poverty and freedom from devastation and paralysing fear—this too would seem to be fairly self-evident to any reasonable and thoughtful person. It isn't good enough, therefore, for capitalistic Westerners to keep on chastising communistic Easterners because the latter are accused of suppressing the freedoms of speech, press, assembly, science, and art; so long as the former insist on keeping the vast majority of their—so-called democratic—populations under the pressure of industrial and economic slavery. The wrong of the one does not make the other right. And if capitalistic Western nations do not wish to continue to make themselves ridiculous in the eyes of the world with their castigation of Soviet communism on account of alleged lack of certain freedom in Russia, they will have to begin seriously to put their own house in order, by adding economic democracy to their already partially achieved political democracy. For human dignity cannot long or permanently be preserved by people who are merely slaves of the machine or slaves of an industrial and economic system in which the profits of sixty families are more important than is the livelihood and the living conditions of sixty million families. To the free and dignified human being economic slavery is not necessarily preferable to political slavery. Slavery is slavery, no matter by what pretentious name it may go (such, for example, as that of "free enterprise"). This is why at least *some* of us in the so-called "New World" have been hailing with real enthusiasm the economic and governmental developments in Great Britain over these past three years. For in those developments we see at last a serious attempt on the part of a Western government to match political democracy with economic democracy. No matter how much human dignity may be a matter of the mind and of the spirit, it is obviously difficult to maintain its consciousness in the

## PHILOSOPHERS IN THE ATOMIC AGE

midst of abject poverty, not to say starvation. Thus, if basic human freedoms are essential to human dignity, we had better think of (and try to establish and maintain) these freedoms *en masse*, rather than permit ourselves to be lulled into an uneasy but self-satisfied sleep by complacency in partial achievements which, good as they may be as far as they go, do not go far enough. Philosophers have been discussing and analysing the nature of "freedoms" for centuries. Now, if many of us wish to be here to enjoy any of those freedoms ten years hence, we had better begin doing our share in helping men in all countries, climes, and conditions to *achieve* these freedoms. For without such serious efforts on our part, our protestations of interest in this field of human dignity are bound to fall more and more on deaf ears, because these protestations will sound to untold millions of our fellowmen like so much hollow mockery.

### CONCLUSION

This, then, is the challenge I offer to philosophers in this new atomic age. That we, first, help men to find their way back to a recovery of *reason* and the application of rational intelligence to all the problems and difficulties of our modern life, including the difficulties which beset humanity to-day in the area of international relations. That, in the second place, we make ever more widely known the scientifically demonstrated fact of the *basic unity of all mankind*. And that, in the third place, we re-affirm our faith in the *ultimate dignity of every man* everywhere and do what we can to further all efforts anywhere on earth to make of this doctrine a living and practical reality.

If philosophers—and by this I mean philosophers everywhere and in every land—were actually successful in transmitting this message to humanity everywhere, I believe this would have the most far-reaching effects, both negative and positive.

On the negative side, it could not help but have a decidedly disparaging and destructive effect upon all the forces—no matter where found—which are now trying to divide humanity, such as (a) irrationalisms of every kind and type, (b) individualistic and nationalistic emotionalisms, (c) discrimination against minorities, (d) racial superiority myths, and (e) provincial religious fanaticisms.

On the positive side, it would be bound to have a decidedly helpful and encouraging effect upon all efforts and tendencies which, anywhere on earth, are trying to unite humanity ultimately (and preferably at the earliest possible moment) in one world government, in which one law for all human beings everywhere would be able to maintain peace and order, and thus keep humanity from fratricidal strife and from destroying itself.

## PHILOSOPHY

The challenge I have laid down is *not* one to maximum co-operation, but rather to minimum co-operation among philosophers. I do not believe that the time will ever come when philosophers will all subscribe to only one—universal—philosophy or philosophical system. Nor do I think that necessary or even desirable.

But it does not seem to me to ask too much of philosophers to expect of them that they support (1) the supremacy of reason as a method of communication, co-operation and agreement; (2) that, secondly, they accept the fact of the basic unity of all mankind; and (3) that, thirdly, they insist upon man's fundamental dignity as a human being.

And the existing world situation simply demands it of us as intellectual leaders of men that, for once, we try to minimize our vast (and sometimes even growing) differences in the areas of specialized philosophical disciplines, and instead to emphasize and even exploit our basic and far reaching agreements on such fundamental and far reaching issues as are those involved in the three proclamations of philosophic faith to which philosophers would now seem to be called.

If from this Congress there could go out word of our unanimous agreement on each of these three confessions of faith, I believe this would give heart and courage to many men all over the world, who look to us for some word of guidance and direction in the dark hours in which we are living to-day.



## PHILOSOPHY

or audible things and are ordinarily attached in an indirect but familiar way to visible, audible and tangible things like dogs, rivers, babies, battles and constellations. This is then adopted as the model after which to describe the significance of expressions which are not proper names, and the habit is formed of treating the verb "to signify" and the phrase "to have a meaning" as analogous relation-stating expressions. "What that expression means" is then construed as the description of some extra-linguistic correlate to the expression, like the dog that answers to the name "Fido." (Similar reasoning might coax people into believing that since "he took a stick" asserts a relation between him and the stick, so "he took a walk," "a nap," "a job," "a liking," "the opportunity" or "time" asserts a relation between him and a funny entity.)

Now a very little reflection should satisfy us that the assimilation to proper names of expressions that are not proper names breaks down from the start. (Indeed the whole point of classing some expressions as proper names is to distinguish them from the others.) No one ever asks What is the meaning of "Robinson Crusoe"? much less Who is the meaning of "Robinson Crusoe"? No one ever confesses that he cannot understand or has misunderstood the name "Charles Dickens" or asks for it to be translated, defined, paraphrased or elucidated. We do not expect dictionaries to tell us who is called by what names. We do not say that the river Mississippi is so and so *ex vi termini*. A man may be described as "the person called 'Robin Hood,'" but not as "the meaning of 'Robin Hood'." It would be absurd to say "the meaning of 'Robin Hood' met the meaning of 'Friar Tuck'." Indeed, to put it generally, it is always nonsense to say of any thing, process or entity "that is a meaning." Indeed, in certain contexts we are inclined not to call proper names "words" at all. We do not complain that the dictionary omits a lot of English words just because it omits the names of people, rivers, mountains and novels, and if someone boasts of knowing two dozen words of Russian and gives the names of that number of Russian towns, newspapers, films and generals, we think that he is cheating. Does "Nijni Novgorod is in Russia" contain three, four or five English words?

There are indeed some important parallels between our ways of using proper names in sentences and our ways of using some, but not many sorts of other expressions. "Who knocked?" can be answered as well by "Mr. Smith" as by "the landlord"; and in "the noise was made by Fido," "the noise was made by the neighbour's retriever" and "the noise was made by him" the proper name, the substantival phrase and the pronoun play similar grammatical rôles. But this no more shows that substantival phrases and pronouns are crypto-proper names than they show that proper names are crypto-pronouns or crypto-substantival phrases.

Two exceptions to the "Fido"-Fido principle were conceded by its devotees. (1) Frege saw that the phrases "the evening star" and "the morning star" do not have the same sense (*Sinn*), even if they happen to apply to or denote (*bedeuten*) the same planet. An astronomical ignoramus might understand the two phrases while wondering whether they are mentions of two planets or of only one. The phrase "the first American pope" does not apply to anyone, but a person who says so shows thereby that he understands the expression. This concession seems to have been thought to be only a tiresome though necessary amendment to the "Fido"-Fido principle. In fact it demolishes it altogether. For it shows that even in the case of that relatively small class of isolable expressions, other than proper names, which are suited to function as the nominatives of certain seeded subject-predicate sentences, knowing what the expressions mean does not entail having met any

## DISCUSSION

appropriate Fidos or even knowing that any such Fidos exist. The things ("entities"), if any, to which such expressions apply are not and are not parts of what the expressions mean, any more than a nail is or is part of how a hammer is used.

(2) The traditional doctrine of terms had required (confusedly enough) the analysis of proposition-expressing sentences into two, or with heart searchings, three or more "terms", and these terms were (erroneously) supposed all to be correlated with entities in the "Fido"-Fido way. But sentences are not just lists like "Socrates, Plato, Aristotle," or even like "Socrates, mortality." For they tell truths or falsehoods, which lists do not do. A sentence must include some expressions which are not terms, i.e. "syncategorematic words" like "is," "if," "not," "and," "all," "some," "a," and so on. Such words are not meaningless, though they are not names, as all categorematic words were (erroneously) supposed to be. They are required for the construction of sentences. (Sometimes special grammatical constructions enable us to dispense with syncategorematic words.) Syncategorematic words were accordingly seen to be in a certain way auxiliary, somewhat like rivets which have no jobs unless there are girders to be riveted. I have not finished saying anything if I merely utter the word "if" or "is." They are syntactically incomplete unless properly collocated with suitable expressions of other sorts. In contrast with them it was erroneously assumed that categorematic words are non-auxiliary or are syntactically complete without collocations with other syncategorematic or categorematic expressions, as though I have finished saying something when I say "Fido," "he," "the first American pope" or "jocular." Russell's doctrine of incomplete symbols was a half-fledged attempt to re-allocate certain expressions from the categorematic to the syncategorematic family. It was half-fledged because it still assumed that there were or ought to be some syntactically complete categorematic expressions, some "logically proper names" which would brook being said *sans phrase*. To call an expression "incomplete" was erroneously supposed to be saying that it did not function like a name, as if the standard of completeness were set by names and not by sentences; in fact it is saying that it is only a fragment of a range of possible sentences. So ordinary proper names are (save perhaps in some of their vocative uses) as incomplete as any other sentence-fragments.

Frege had, in consistency, to apply his modified "Fido"-Fido principle to expressions of all sorts, save those which are patently syncategorematic. So he had to say, for example, that a full indicative sentence both names an entity and has a sense (*Sinn*). Its sense is what is sometimes called a "proposition", its nominee is a queer contraption which he calls a "truth-value." To use Mill's language (from which, perhaps, Frege's *Bedeutung* and *Sinn* were adapted), an indicative sentence denotes a truth-value and connotes a proposition (or *Gedanke*, as Frege calls it).

Carnap diverges slightly from the "Fido"-Fido principle—or rather he thinks he diverges from it (But his divergence is not due to recognition of any of the difficulties that I have adduced above.) Instead of speaking of expressions as "names," he gives them the intimidating title "designators." (He likes to coin words ending in "tor.") He speaks of "descriptors" instead of "descriptions," "predicators" instead of "predicates," "functors" instead of "functions," and toys with the project of piling on the agony with "conceptor," "abstractor," "individuator," and so on. But as his two cardinal words "designator" and "predicator" are employed with, if possible, even greater ambiguity and vagueness than has traditionally attached to the words "term" and "predicate," I hope that future exercises in logical

nomenclature will be concentrated less on the terminations than on the offices of our titles.) By a "designator" Carnap means "all those expressions to which a semantical analysis of meaning is applied," i.e. "sentences, *predicators* (i.e. predicate expressions, in a wide sense, including class expressions), functors (i.e. expressions for functions in the narrower sense, excluding propositional functions), and individual expressions; other types may be included, if desired (e.g. connectives, both extensional and modal ones). The term 'designator' is not meant to imply that these expressions are names of some entities . . . but merely that they have, so to speak, an independent meaning, at least independent to some degree" (*sic*) (p. 6). Thus everything goes to the laundry in the same washing-basket, from "(declarative) sentences," which have "a meaning of the highest degree of independence," down to "expressions with no or little independence of meaning ('syncategorematic' in traditional terminology)" (p. 7). It is an inauspicious start, particularly since the notion of independence is not only left perfectly vague but is repeatedly spoken of as something of which there are degrees.

It is, however, clear from his practice, though not from his statement, that "designator" is generally equivalent to the word "term" of the (I had hoped, moribund) tradition.

Instead of saying, after Frege, that what a designator means is, in the first instance, that to which it stands as "Fido" stands to Fido, Carnap says that what a designator means is two things at once, namely the intension that it has and the extension that it has. The intension corresponds with Frege's sense (*Sinn*); the extension is what the designator actually applies to. Knowing the intension of a designator is understanding it; knowing its extension is knowing some facts about both the designator and the furniture of the world, namely that the designator applies to certain bits of that furniture. Carnap says a little, though not enough, about fictitious and nonsensical designators, i.e. those which do not in fact have and those which could not conceivably have extensions. He wrongly says (on p. 202) what, in effect, he rightly denies (on p. 21 and p. 30), "we must realize that every designator has both an intension and an extension."

As a senseless designator cannot and a fictitious designator does not apply to anything, it is clear that the question whether a designator does apply to anything cannot arise until after we know what, if anything, it means. The things it applies to, if any, cannot therefore, for this and other reasons, be ingredients in what it means. It should be noticed that we hardly ever know and hardly ever want to know how many things, if any, our designators apply to. We do not have inventories of stars, ripples or jokes; nor do we try to get them. But we can talk sense and follow talk about stars, ripples and jokes. So we are not missing anything we want to know about the uses of expressions if we do not know their extensions (in this sense).

But these supposedly twin notions of "having an intension" and "having an extension" need further examination. Carnap professes in his use of them to be merely clarifying a traditional usage. Yet not only have there been several discrepant usages (as Joseph and Keynes showed long ago), but the usage to which Carnap attaches himself belonged to the muddled doctrine of terms, which itself rested on the "Fido"-Fido principle which he disclaims. I think he actually confuses two nearly disconnected usages when he assimilates the sense in which truth-functions are called "extensional" while modal functions are called "intensional," to the sense in which certain nominatives are said to have extensions and intensions. The use of "extensional" and "intensional" to mean "non-modal" and "modal," derives from the debate about the ambiguity of the word "all" as meaning sometimes

## DISCUSSION

"every one of the . . ." and sometimes "any . . ." No one, I think, ever couched this debate in the dictions of "denotation" and "connotation." On the other hand the debate about the extensions and intensions (i.e. the denotations and connotations) of terms or (some) substantival expressions was not a debate about the ambiguity of a certain syncategorematic word, but, supposedly, about the dual function of all ordinary categorematic words that are used or usable in the subject-place in subject-predicate sentences. The connection between the two debates was, I imagine, this. Some people said that in "all men are mortal" we are talking about or mentioning some men; others said that we need not be doing this, but only saying that there could not be any immortal men. The former were saying that the sentence was a categorical one, the latter that it was hypothetical. The former were committed to saying that the subject-term of their categorical sentence must, *qua* being a subject-term, name or denote some men. The latter were saying that the protasis of a hypothetical is not asserted for true and that the whole hypothetical could be true even though it was actually false that there existed any men, so no men were named or denoted by any part of the protasis.

The traditional doctrine erroneously took the two premises and the conclusion of any syllogism as isomorphic subject-predicate propositions and, out of deference to Barbara, took such supposedly bi-polar propositions as the standard model of all or of all respectable propositions. All such propositions are, it supposed, analysable into a subject-term coupled by a copula to a predicate-term. And what was predicate-term in one proposition could, with perhaps a little surreptitious re-wording, reappear as subject-term in another.

The subject-term was the name of what the proposition was about; the predicate term named what was affirmed or denied of that subject. Ordinarily the subject-term was supposed to name a particular (or a batch of particulars) and the predicate-term was supposed to name the attribute or property that was asserted or denied to belong to it (or them). Now though the predicate-term of a standard subject-predicate proposition could (it was wrongly thought) move over unmodified to be the subject-term of another proposition, still in the propositions in which it functions predicatively it does not do, what the subject-term does, namely mention the thing or things that the proposition is about. It is, roughly, only in their subject-roles that terms are used mentioningly. (And even this does not hold in, for example, the propositions of fiction, where the subject-terms are used only quasi-mentioningly. It does not hold in affirmative or negative existence-propositions. It does not hold in all identity-assertions, or in definitions. And it does not hold in assertions of the pattern "any S is P.")

Where the subject-terms of such sentences are used mentioningly, be they names, pronouns, demonstratives or substantival phrases, we could say, if there were any point in doing so, that the things, persons or processes mentioned were the "extension" or the "denotations" of those nominatives; and we could extend this to the things, persons or process mentioned by such other mentioning expressions as might occur in, for example, relational sentences like "Caesar was killed by his friend, Brutus." But then it would be quite clear that other fragments of sentences such as "is mortal" or "was killed by" are not mentioning expressions and have no extensions or denotations in this sense. Nor would entire sentences have extensions or denotations in this sense. It should also be clear that the persons, things or processes so mentioned are not themselves parts of the meanings of the mentioning-expressions. It would belong to the meaning of "his friend, Brutus," that it

## PHILOSOPHY

was being used to mention just this person, just as it is the present function of this hammer to knock in this nail. But the nail is not part of the present function of the hammer, and Brutus is not part of the use of an expression which mentions him. To understand the reference would be to realize that this was how it was being used. But Brutus could not be a way in which an expression was used.

On this interpretation, only a minority of expressions would have extensions; none of the standard syncategorematic expressions and none of the standard predicate-expressions would do so; no sentences or sub-sentences, and not even the nominatives of all subject-predicate sentences would do so; and even those expressions which are used mentioningly would not have the mentioned persons or things, but only the fact that they were mentioned, as parts of their meanings. In particular it is an error to suppose that predicatively used expressions like "is omniscient" or "is the friend of Caesar" can be transferred unaltered to the subject-place. For, for one thing, it is an important grammatical fact that since neither "is omniscient" nor "omniscient" can be the subject of a verb, a new nominative has to be constructed such as "the omniscient being" or "all omniscient persons"; and this is not equivalent to the predicate "... omniscient." And this grammatical fact reflects a difference of employment; for "the omniscient being" and "all omniscient beings" are ordinarily used in the mentioning way, which was not how the predicate had been used. It is a corresponding error to suppose, as Carnap seems to do, that a "predicator" is being mentioningly used in another way, namely as mentioning a property, e.g. a quality, a state, a relation or a natural kind. The predicate in "Socrates is mortal" does not mention the property of mortality—we use the noun "mortality" for that purpose. Adjectives and verbs do not do the same jobs as the abstract nouns that are commonly formed out of them and we have to know how to use adjectives, verbs, etc., for their own jobs, before we can learn to use the corresponding abstract nouns for their quite different jobs. Only the sophisticated mention or talk about properties. It is not true, therefore, that predicators jointly mention properties and either the things that have them or (what is quite different) the class of things that have them. The truth is that they do not do either of these things; for they are not mentioningly-used expressions.

One of Carnap's major concerns is to resolve the long-standing dispute whether predicate-expressions stand for (or denote) properties or classes. Believers in universals assert the former; believers in classes assert the latter. Carnap's eirenicism is to say that they do both at once. They have classes for their extensions and properties for their intensions. But the dispute was a spurious one. For the predicate-expressions alluded to are not mentioning-expressions or, more specifically, names, at all. We mention classes by such phrases as "the class of . . .," and we mention properties by such expressions as "jocularity." The adjective "jocular" is not used and could not grammatically be used to deputize for either. Nor could they deputize for it.

Carnap's way of (nominally) dispensing with the "Fido"-Fido principle does not release him from the Frege-Meinong embarrassments about sentences. The sentences which he calls "declarative" (which appears to mean what everyone else means by "indicative"), while not described as names of subsistent truths and falsehoods, are none the less described as having such entities for their intensions. For their extensions they have some mysteries called "truth-values." For sentences, having been classed as a species of "designator," have to possess their significance in the ways prescribed generally for designators. And a designator, we are told in another connection (p. 107), "is regarded as having a close semantical relation not to one but

## DISCUSSION

to two entities, namely its extension and its intension, in such a way that a sentence containing the designator may be construed as being about both the one and the other entity." So though in fact only a minority of sentence-fragments, namely mentioningly-used substantival expressions, can be said to have extensions, Carnap has to assimilate the jobs even of sentences to this special job of a species of sentence-fragments. And this is precisely parallel to the Frege-Meinong mistake of treating sentences as names. These theorists assimilated saying to calling; Carnap assimilates saying to mentioning. Yet both mentions and names (which are a species of mention) are ordinarily used only as fragments of sentences. They enable us to say certain sorts of things, but when we have uttered them by themselves we have not yet said anything.

Carnap flounders uneasily over the question, How do false sentences mean anything? as anybody must who thinks that "meaning something" is a relation-expression. He thinks that true sentences have propositions for their intensions, which propositions are cosily exemplified by facts. (I fail to see how a fact can be an example of a true proposition. Could there be several examples of the same true proposition and, if not, what does "example" mean?) But a false proposition is not thus cosily matched. So Carnap has to say that a proposition is a compound of elements each of which is severally exemplified, though the compound of them is not. A sentence is, therefore, after all, just a list. "Socrates is stupid" is equivalent to "Socrates, attribution, stupidity." Three entities are mentioned in one breath, but no one thing is said. Plato knew better than this, but then he paid some attention to saying.

Carnap generously, if somewhat airily, says that readers who are discontented with his account of the meanings of entire sentences need not let it worry them. The rest of his theory of meaning does not hinge on this particular bit of it. But surely, if his method of meaning-analysis does not apply to what a sentence means, this shows that there is something wrong with his method. And, worse than this, if the one section in which he tries to discuss saying (as distinct from naming and mentioning) is inadequate or wrong, it would be rash to feel confident in the merits of his account of the meanings of sentence-fragments. If the plot of the drama is bungled, the scenes and acts can hardly be well-constructed.

Carnap more than once says that he is not guilty of hypostatization, though he has to find not one but two entities to be the correlates of every designator. The term "entity" we are requested to take, leaving aside "the metaphysical connotations associated with it," "in the simple sense in which it is meant here as a common designation for properties, propositions and other intensions, on the one hand, and for classes, individuals and other extensions, on the other. It seems to me that there is no other suitable term in English with this very wide range" (p. 22). Shades of Meinong! Now by "hypostatization" we mean treating as names or other sorts of mentions expressions which are not names or other sorts of mentions. And just this is the tenor of the whole of Carnap's meaning-analysis. True, he abjures certain mythological dictions in which some philosophers have talked about their postulated entities. True, too, he sometimes uses hard-headed (but none the less mythological) dictions of his own, as when he says "the term 'property' is to be understood in an objective, physical sense, not in a subjective, mental sense; the same holds for terms like 'concept,' 'intension,' etc. The use of these and related terms does not involve a hypostatization" (p. 16); and "the term 'concept' . . . is not to be understood in a mental sense, that is, as referring to a process of imagining, thinking, conceiving,

## PHILOSOPHY

or the like, but rather to something objective that is found in nature and that is expressed in language by a designation of non-sentential form" (p. 21). Whereabouts in nature are we to look for concepts? How are the properties "Jocularly" and "Primeness" to be understood in a physical sense?

My chief impression of this book is that it is an astonishing blend of technical sophistication with philosophical naïvete. Its theories belong to the age that waxed with Mill and began to wane soon after the *Principles of Mathematics*. The muddled terminology of extension and intension which belonged to the muddled and obsolete doctrine of terms is disinterred in order to help construct a two-dimensional relational theory of meaning, at a time when it ought to be notorious that relational theories of meaning will not do.

Carnap's influence on philosophers and logicians is very strong. The importance of semantic problems in philosophy and logic cannot be overestimated. It is because I fear that the solutions of these problems may be impeded by the dissemination of his mistakes that I have reviewed so scoldingly the treatise of a thinker whose views are beginning to be regarded as authoritative.

GILBERT RYLE.

# PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

## PHILOSOPHY IN FRANCE

M. ALEXANDRE KOJEVE's *Introduction à la Lecture de Hegel* (Gallimard, 1947, fr. 640), is a strange and interesting work. It consists, in the main, of revised transcripts of lectures delivered by him at l'École pratique des Hautes Études between 1933 and 1939. The central theme of these lectures is Hegel's philosophy of religion as developed in the *Phenomenology of Mind*, but there are also lectures on Hegel's dialectic and on his views about death. The lectures are collected in a rather haphazard way, and the same themes are, in some cases, worked over more than once. Apparently M. Kojève had intended writing a general introduction to the study of Hegel but has been prevented by other work from doing so, and this collection has been published in default of the more coherent work that had been hoped for. In spite of the resulting formlessness, the book is provocative and absorbing. It is well known that Hegel held philosophy to be the rational exposition of truths which in religion are expressed figuratively. The truth of religion is absorbed into philosophy and thereby raised to a more conscious level. It is also well known that Hegel preferred to write of the Absolute Spirit rather than of God, though there has been some difference of opinion among commentators whether he regarded the Absolute Spirit as supra-personal in some unspecified way, or more definitely as a society of persons. On either interpretation Hegel was believed to maintain that man and nature are abstractions within the concrete Absolute Idea. M. Kojève, however, thinks that Hegel departed even further from the traditional beliefs than is generally thought. Indeed, the Hegel he depicts is very much more like Strauss, Feuerbach and Marx than like the ambiguously rationalistic Christian presented to the Victorian public by his Scottish impressarios. M. Kojève's Hegel holds (among much else) (a), that the *Phenomenology of Mind* is an account of the development of the human mind, the Absolute Spirit representing man in the world; (b), that Christianity, though the culmination of religious thought, contains within it the causes of its own destruction; (c), that the critical work of the French Enlightenment had successfully and finally exposed the instability of Christian theology; (d), that Napoleon, as man of action, was the concrete embodiment of the last stage of human achievement in contrast with the Romantic poets, who exalted man in words only, mourning the loss of a God they could not replace by their own deeds; (e), that Napoleon, however, was not aware of his own place in history, so that Hegel himself was needed to supply the perfecting moment of self-consciousness. "Mais Hegel reconnaît et révèle Napoléon à l'Allemagne. Il croit pouvoir la sauver (par sa *Phénoménologie*), la conserver sous une forme sublimée (*aufgehoben*) dans le sein de l'Empire napoléonien" (p. 153). M. Kojève does not know whether Hegel really did hope to become the Plato to Napoleon's Dion, and thinks that the passage of the *Phenomenology* referring to this is perhaps purposely obscure. That it is obscure, for whatever reason, no one, I think, could possibly deny. These and other equally surprising themes are supported by M. Kojève in detailed commentary on the text of the *Phenomenology* and with some reference to Hegel's lectures of the period. I must confess, however, that I find some of the passages discussed so obscure that I can imagine no means of deciding between any interpretations that might be put upon them. I am sure, however, that



## PHILOSOPHY

M. Kojève is right to show how deeply impressed Hegel was by the French Enlightenment and Revolution. The highly orthodox Frederick William III may well have been right when later he disapproved of Hegelian influences on the German clergy. Hegel writes without passion and with some approval of the Enlightenment and of Napoleon as late as the last pages of his lectures on the Philosophy of History. His lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, too, show that in his Berlin period he expressed views on religion not substantially different from those of the *Phenomenology*. For example, there is the same emphasis on the function of labour in lifting man above nature (e.g. Eng. Trans., vol. II, p. 55), and the same allegorical interpretation of the death of Christ (e.g. vol. III, p. 99). But I am not at all convinced that Hegel really did hope to supply Napoleon with the self-consciousness which that great man is (so surprisingly) alleged to have lacked. Reference to Rosenkranz's *Life*, indeed, shows Hegel at Jena admiring and greatly interested ("this world-soul" and "such an individual when here, concentrated into a single point, sitting on a horse, stretches over the world and masters it") but expressing the greatest concern at the possible loss of part of the manuscript of the *Phenomenology*.

Even though Haym, in his lectures on Hegel published in 1857, was indignant at what he regarded as Hegel's lack of German patriotism, it may well be that as Hegel grew older in Berlin his attitude, if not his views, changed a good deal. M. Jean Hyppolite, however, in his *Introduction à la Philosophie de l'Histoire de Hegel* (Librairie Marcel Rivière et Cie, Paris, 1948, fr. 125), like M. Kojève, gives most attention to Hegel's early views. He shows that what was, from the beginning, distinctive of Hegel's thought was a pre-occupation with mind as manifested in nations and religions and thus also with politics and history. Involved in this was his apprehension of the contrast between the Hellenic Civilization with its unselfconscious social religion and Christian Civilization with the "unhappy consciousness" of the individual aware of his own sin yet continuing to pursue personal ends. M. Hyppolite's account of the early writings is, in the light of what has just been said, interesting for some references to a *Life of Jesus* which Hegel wrote at Berne and in which there is no mention of the miracles nor of the resurrection of Jesus. M. Hyppolite's interpretation of the theme of the *Phenomenology*, however, is less eccentric (and less Marxist) than M. Kojève's. He emphasizes that whereas in his earliest writings Hegel looked for the overcoming of the "unhappy consciousness" in a new form of society, in the *Phenomenology* the reconciliation was to be achieved by philosophy. This book is informative and clear, and, unlike most "introductions" to Hegel, commendably brief. I feel pretty sure that those philosophers who are fond of quoting Hegel's silliest remarks about planets and the Oriental world rather miss his point. Surely he was, like Epicurus, Zeno, Pyrrho, Rousseau and Spinoza, primarily concerned with "what shall I do to be saved?" It is also worth remarking that he may not have believed that so many of his students' lecture-notes would be published.

While we are on this subject, reference should be made to Father F. Grégoire's *Aux Sources de la Pensée de Marx, Hegel, Feuerbach* (Louvain, Éditions de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie; Paris, Joseph Vrin, 1947). In the excellent critical exposition of Hegelianism which takes up the first part of the book there is, it is true, no mention of Napoleon, but Father Grégoire is so far in agreement with M. Kojève as to write that "Hegel himself is a Hegelian of the Left in matters of philosophy and religion, and a Hegelian of the Right in matters of politics." Father Grégoire suggests that Strauss's *Life of Jesus* probably represented what Hegel himself believed about the

truth of Christianity. Father Grégoire's account of Feuerbach, too, is very well done, but I think it is a pity that Father Grégoire does not contest Marx's unjustified claim that Feuerbach had failed to seek for the *cause* of the human propensity to project his own *qualities* into his notions of God and of heaven. Not only did Feuerbach see the cause of this in the distresses arising from human conflicts, but he also has the credit (or discredit) of advancing the same cure that Marx did, viz. politics as the substitute for religion. Another work on the Hegelian origins of Marx's thought is *Le Développement de la Pensée Dialectique* by Zevedei Barbu (Alfred Costes, Paris, 1947). M. Barbu was, at the time of publication, a counsellor at the Roumanian Legation in London.<sup>1</sup> He makes scholarly and respectful use of the sources and has produced a work that should be read by anyone curious to see how philosophy is being written on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

M. Émile Bréhier's learned and lively History of Philosophy is, I hope, well known in this country as well as in France. As an admirer of that work it was with interest, therefore, that I turned to his *Science et Humanisme* (Éditions Albin Michel, Paris, 1947, fr. 60) to discover what this scholar, who has expounded the views of so many other thinkers, has to say on his own account. This book of some sixty pages may be described as an elegant and eloquent secular sermon about the problems facing those who wish to defend a humanistic outlook against its contemporary opponents. According to M. Bréhier, the important elements in humanism are (1), the traditions of life and thought handed on from the Greek and Roman world and maintained by education in the "humanities," and (2), standards of conduct and achievement based on human (as distinct from supernatural) valuations. (1) has to contend with a good deal of rather arrogant criticism from those who are exclusively inspired by the experimental sciences. Apart from this, however, more serious efforts have been made to show that adequate moral standards are implicit in the processes of scientific enquiry. M. Bréhier shows in general how shallow these criticisms are, and in particular how the moral standards alleged to be implicit in scientific work (e.g. co-operation, respect for liberty,) are subordinate to the search for knowledge and control of nature. The so-called "morality of science" is a body of procedures or techniques quite incapable of providing for the fullness of life. Humanism has also to contend (a) with what M. Bréhier calls "naturalism," (b) with democratic levelling, and (c) with the fashionable irrationalist, even apocalyptic, forms of religious thought. "Naturalism" is the romantic tendency, recurrent among gloomy northerners, to find satisfaction in the primitive, formless, unconscious, primeval, rather than in what human thought and skill have fashioned—in the sublime of waste lands rather than in the artifices of Versailles. M. Bréhier may well be worried at the threatened Teutonic conquest of the French mind, and has a dig at M. Sartre *en passant*. He also fears, as do some in this country too, that since the humanities have been associated with privilege, attacks on privilege may end with Caliban in control. There is no need for me to dwell on the contempt for mankind so sedulously spread in a good deal of religious literature to-day. In this connection, however, it is interesting to notice that M. Bréhier (who is pretty knowledgeable about what is afoot in Europe) says that a similar tendency exists in Orthodox circles in Russia and Jugoslavia, where Western liberalism is regarded as the "mortal enemy" of Christianity, destined to be replaced by a "panhumanism" suspiciously like other movements which, in that part of the world, have availed themselves of that Greek prefix. If

<sup>1</sup> According to newspaper reports he has now resigned, saying: "I never thought that a progressive political regime would have to resort, as a condition of its success, to the abolition of individual freedom of conscience."

## PHILOSOPHY

M. Bréhier's suggested remedies (insistence on the maintenance of human rights, preservation of the "humanities" in education, the meeting of minds across national frontiers, etc.) seem a little unexciting, that, I think, is in the nature of the case. The ends which he approves cannot be achieved by plans and campaigns. Those who want them can only pursue them spontaneously, and unfortunately those who do not want them can make that pursuit very difficult for those who do.

There are two new books of some topical interest from the circle around M. Sartre. The first of these, M. Merleau-Ponty's *Humanisme et Terreur, Essai sur le Problème Communiste* (Gallimard, Paris, 1947, fr. 325), collects together a number of articles about Koestler's novels and the Moscow trials which appeared in the Existentialist review *Temps Modernes* where they gave rise to some vigorous controversy with some of the other political and literary journals. M. Merleau-Ponty is the author of a book entitled *Phénoménologie de la Perception* which has gained him a wide reputation in France, although I do not know whether any copies have reached this country. In an article on Koestler entitled *Le Yogi et le Proletaire* M. Merleau-Ponty was supposed by many of his readers to have intended to justify the trials which in 1938 resulted in the execution of a number of the pioneers of the Russian Revolution. His arguments satisfied neither the communists, who knew he was not one of them, nor the non-communists, who were shocked both at his original thesis and by what they considered to be his subsequent evasions. In an article entitled *Savoir Lire* M. Merleau-Ponty accused his critics of not taking pains to understand what he was saying. This book enables us to study his arguments in some detail, and it is clear that, like M. Sartre himself, he is much concerned with the moral problems involved in political, and particularly in revolutionary, action. A man who by entering politics has shown his willingness to govern other men is no longer, according to M. Merleau-Ponty, able to justify his conduct by his aspirations or intentions. He becomes in some sense a public property. He is, as a public figure, what others take him for, and will be judged by what actually happens, not by what he strove to bring about. A revolutionary politician is endeavouring to turn the possibilities of the present in the direction he approves of. A Marxist revolutionary knows in general what the future will be, and the details of his public behaviour are judged by his fellows entirely in the light of that future. Thus the Moscow trials were not intended to establish that the accused had committed this or that act of sabotage as a trial for murder establishes the details of the murderer's movements. The aim of the trials was to show that the accused had pursued political policies which were in fact harmful to the Revolution. This is indeed the main endeavour of revolutionary tribunals. "La justice bourgeoise prend pour instance dernière le passé, la justice révolutionnaire l'avenir." M. Merleau-Ponty thinks that some of the accused, when they saw the remarkable growth of German military power, genuinely agreed with their prosecutors in condemning their previous conduct. M. Merleau-Ponty's discussion of the principles involved is stimulating. His mistake, I think, was to mingle his groping but fruitful observations on political morality with rather unfruitful and not very well informed political polemics. Doubtless this is an example of the "engagement" demanded of practising Existentialists. I think, however, that the important things that M. Merleau-Ponty has to say would be all the more effective if they were disengaged from ephemeral gossip about the aims of the Soviet Union.

The second book from the Sartre circle is Mademoiselle Simone de Beauvoir's *Pour une Morale de l'Ambiguïté* (Gallimard, Paris, 1947, fr. 245). Mademoiselle de Beauvoir has written a number of novels in the Existentialist vein (one of

## PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

which has recently appeared in an English translation), and her familiarity with M. Sartre's modes of thought is unquestioned. The present essay, written in a style of rather pleasant solemnity, is an exposition of the moral theory which Mademoiselle de Beauvoir considers to be involved in atheistic Existentialism. The morality of "ambiguity" is the true morality. It is contrasted with the morality of people who are "sérieux," where the word "sérieux" is used pejoratively in a sense not unlike that of the English word "respectable." People are "sérieux" (we might, perhaps, say "earnest," or "proper" or even "pompous") when they look upon values as though they were things. Children are necessarily "sérieux," since, coming into a society they have had no share in making, and protected by their parents from grown-up anxieties, they naturally look upon good and evil as things which adults tell them about as they tell them about the sun and the moon and the other side of the earth. As the child grows up, however, he should begin to realize that society is dependent upon what men are aiming at, and that he can make some contribution to the shaping of it. That is, he should become aware of human freedom. The "respectable" man, on the other hand, does not develop in this way. He continues with his childish certainties, or with substitutes for them. He makes no attempt to bring human potentialities to fruition. His aim, rather, is to escape from his freedom by submitting himself to a definite creed which allows no doubts or problems. He *knows* who are good and who are bad, what is right and what is wrong. In the light of this knowledge he is prepared to support the most brutal and to engage in the most hypocritical of conduct. "Serious" men may even be iconoclasts when, like Baudelaire, they are so subject to their childish idols that they make a life's work of blaspheming them. The truly moral man, on the contrary, does not evade his responsibilities by abandoning himself to etiquettes and slogans. He recognizes that there are no recipes that can save him from the anguish of excruciating choices, in the making of which he will be demonstrating what sort of ideal he has for himself as a man. His tendency will be to open up human possibilities and so to incur the dangers of the unknown. Unwilling to shelter behind a hook of rules, he will be risking, even gambling, in all his important decisions. This, of course, is no more than the central theme of the essay, and there is not the space to discuss even this as fully as it might be. In reading this book, however, I am strengthened in the belief, which I expressed in the last number of this Survey, that M. Sartre and those who think like him adopt a position in some respects akin to that of Kant. The likenesses, however, are well concealed by the novel language they employ. Nor do I think that this novel language is employed (as their opponents allege) merely to create a system of passwords for a coterie of initiates. When, as is characteristic of our time, crimes are generally committed in the name of virtue, the language of virtue becomes suspect, and there is a lot to be said for endeavouring to adopt modes of speech that do not discredit what is really creditable. It is in this way, it seems to me, that Mademoiselle de Beauvoir is led into what at first sight seems to be the paradoxical position of earnestly castigating "earnest" people. She does not use the plain moral language, because if she does people will sarcastically murmur that that is the sort of thing they were taught at Sunday School. Existentialist moralists are endeavouring to restate, in a language of paradox, what the sophistication of the age prevents us from taking seriously when stated in the language of tradition.

H. B. ACTON.

## NEW BOOKS

- v *The Definition of Good.* By A. C. EWING. (Routledge and Kegan Paul. Pp. v + 215. Price 12s. 6d.)

This book, in Dr. Ewing's words, is a discussion of what good is, not of what things are good, and it is *therefore* neither an attempt to commend certain values nor to give advice on the solution of concrete ethical problems. But it would be wrong to suppose that the author has no practical aim in view. "I think," he writes, "that it is an extremely important task, both practically and theoretically, to stem the tide of subjectivism and naturalism in ethics, for the development of such beliefs seems to me bound to weaken seriously the sense of moral obligation by taking away any rational basis for ethics. To stem this tide we need three things—criticism of the subjectivists and naturalists, reply to their criticisms, and a positive opposing theory as to what good is" (p. 212). I shall consider first the extent to which Dr. Ewing has succeeded in his purpose and conclude with some remarks on the merits of that purpose itself.

His criticism of subjectivism and naturalism as he defines them seems to me well-founded. The emotive view sketched by Professor Ayer in "Language, Truth and Logic" is inadequate to cover the facts. Few would hold that the difference between "Belsen!" and "the Albert Memorial!" is sufficient to discriminate between my judgments about these institutions, and I doubt whether Ayer himself would regard his statements in this early work as a satisfactory exposition of his present view. Ethical sentences are not just ejaculations nor are they partly judgments about the speaker's psychology claiming to be true and partly the expression of emotive attitudes, including under this some kind of command or exhortation, as Professor Stevenson in *Ethics and Language* maintains that they are.

But Dr. Ewing is on much less secure ground when he attempts to dispose of the arguments in favour of some kind of ethical relativism. I cannot argue the point here, but it seems to me that he is just mistaken in supposing that discrepancies in moral judgments can be analysed into differences in educational standards coupled with errors about matters of fact. Neither the late Dr. Goebbels nor the present rulers of Russia could fairly be charged either with lack of education or with ignorance as to the probable consequences of their actions. That is not the trouble. Certainly ethical statements cannot be "reduced to" statements about physics, biology or physiology, but Dr. Ewing's case (pp. 20-22) for doubting the existence of "irreducible differences in ethical intuition" is extremely unconvincing.

Having disposed of the claims of the subjectivists and naturalists and refuted their criticisms, Dr. Ewing turns his attention to the coherence theories which Professor Paton and others have advocated. His main criticism here is that such theories are all in his sense naturalistic since they attempt to reduce ethics to something else, namely logical consistency. He also points out that, unless they are supported by ethical intuitions of some kind, they remain empty of content and unhelpful as definitions. But his condemnation of them is only partial. As he says later on, "some thinkers have stressed intuition and some coherence, but both are needed in ethics. The coherence test plays an essential part in confirming, amending, clarifying and extending what first presents itself as a more or less confused intuition" (p. 211).

## NEW BOOKS

This brings us to Dr. Ewing's own definition of the important ethical words "good" and "ought." "Good" is defined as "what ought to be the object of a pro attitude." "Pro attitude" (Ross's expression) covers "any favourable attitude towards something, for instance, choice, desire, liking, pursuit, approval, admiration." I do not think it is wise to lump all these words together as they behave in very different ways. But what Dr. Ewing wants to maintain is that "when something is intrinsically good, it is (other things being equal) something that on its own account we ought to welcome, rejoice in if it exists, seek to produce if it does not exist" (p. 149).

This naturally leads us to enquire into the meaning of "ought" which Dr. Ewing regards as the central point of his enquiry. Here again we have a complex notion. It includes (1) fittingness, (2) moral obligation. The former cannot be analysed in terms of the latter, but Dr. Ewing considers, though he admits that he is not absolutely certain about it, that moral obligation may be definable in terms of fittingness with some psychological concept or concepts (p. 168).

He is thus exempt from the necessity of postulating an unanalysable quality called "goodness" and claims to have given what he describes as the minimum for a non-naturalist theory, that is "the non-naturalist theory which a converted naturalist could accept with the least divergence from his previous views." It is, he considers, more difficult to deny that there is a relation of fittingness not analysable in purely psychological terms, than to deny there is a quality, goodness, which is not thus analysable.

Throughout the book Dr. Ewing is moderate in stating his own view and fair to the views he criticizes. Indeed he is so moderate and so fair that he seems occasionally to be in danger of accepting the faith of the heathen he has come to convert. But in spite of this I find *The Definition of Good* unsatisfying since I cannot help feeling that his approach to the problems of ethics is radically wrong. Dr. Ewing's questions, like those of many other distinguished moralists, seem to me to be unreal because the concepts used in them are out of date. I cannot see that words like "natural," "non-natural," "objectivity," and "natural science" are of the slightest help in elucidating sentences in which "good" and "ought" occur. They were once held to be relevant for two reasons, (a) because ethical statements were thought to differ from scientific statements in that they expressed eternal and immutable verities, (b) because many scientists believed that *their* statements, since they were verifiable by a special experimental technique, enjoyed a special status known as "objectivity." Neither of these claims will stand close examination now. Dr. Ewing himself, in spite of his protests, has really given up the first of them and the second needs only to be stated clearly to reveal its weakness. Certainly "wicked," "ugly" and "yellow" behave in different ways, but I do not see why anybody who is not committed to a very queer theory of knowledge should find this surprising.

Much of what Dr. Ewing says seems to me true, but I cannot see that his conclusion comes to anything more than the statement that "X is good" and "I ought to do Y" differ in an important way from "I like X" and "I want to do Y." Just what the difference is remains obscure and "fittingness" does nothing to remove the obscurity since it is itself a hopelessly vague word. "This key fits the lock" is clear enough, but is "This act fits the situation" anything more than a metaphor?

T. D. WELDON.

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*The Pre-Socratic Philosophers: a Companion to Diels.* By KATHLEEN FREEMAN.  
(Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1946. Pp. xvi + 468. Price 25s.)

## PHILOSOPHY-

- ✓ *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy.* By A. H. ARMSTRONG. (London: Methuen & Co. 1947. Pp. xvi + 241. Price 15s.)
- ✓ *Knowledge and the Good in Plato's Republic.* By H. W. B. JOSEPH. (Oxford University Press. 1948. Pp. viii + 75. Price 5s.)

These three books on Ancient Philosophy may conveniently be reviewed together. But an apology is needed to the author of the first of the three for the long delay in dealing with it.

Dr. Freeman's book is intended, primarily, as a companion or guide to Diels' *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. It follows closely the order and arrangement of that great work and deals with all the numerous thinkers and writers mentioned in it. It gives a summary of all the available information about the life and thought of each of them, mostly taken from Diels, though there are a few additional points from other sources, and some statements of the modern controversies about their interpretation. The footnotes give references to Diels and to all the other sources quoted. The intention, as I understand it, is to provide the reader with an outline summary of all that is known about the thinkers discussed, and then to lead him on to look up for himself in Diels or elsewhere the further evidence on any points that interest him. The book is not to be regarded as a history of pre-Socratic philosophy but rather as a full and complete index to such a history and the evidence on which it would be based. The scale of the work hardly allows any discussion or exposition of the philosophical implications of the various views, and when occasionally an attempt is made at this, as in the treatment of Zeno's paradoxes, it seems something in the nature of an intrusion. There is one other minor criticism that might be made. I should have thought it would have been possible to give rather more in the way of verbatim translations of some of the fragments. The actual words are always more impressive than a paraphrase, however accurate. But taken altogether the book is a monument of industry and scholarship, and should prove most useful.

Mr. Armstrong's book is a history of Ancient Philosophy from the earliest beginnings down to the end of the Academy at the beginning of the sixth century A.D. It is an admirable work which can be warmly recommended. It demands remarkable powers of exposition to be able to compress, as Mr. Armstrong has done, the history of such a long period into an accurate and readable summary, a summary which is marked throughout by careful scholarship and sound sense and judgment. No doubt there are individual points on which it would be possible to dispute his opinion. But I, at any rate, found myself agreeing with him far more often than I disagreed with him. He is certainly never perverse or wrong-headed, and there are always some good grounds for his views.

The particular interest of his book is to be found in the special standpoint from which it is written. Mr. Armstrong is a Catholic, and his fundamental interest is in the relation of Greek thought to scholastic philosophy. The book, he tells us, "is conceived first and foremost as an historical introduction to the *Philosophia Perennis*." This point of view colours the treatment throughout. But it does not distort it; A great deal of the ground covered would, of course, be the same from whatever point of view it was approached. Apart from that, however, there are certain tendencies sometimes to be noticed in Catholic writers, for instance the tendency to undue depreciation of Plato and exaltation of Aristotle, which Mr. Armstrong successfully avoids. He is fair to Plato, and if, possibly, a trifle more than fair to Aristotle, he is certainly not uncritical of him.

But it is in the direction of interest and emphasis that his special point

of view particularly shows itself. Broadly speaking, with many qualifications, it would be true to say that one of the main interests of most non-Catholic writers on Greek Philosophy is in its relation to modern scientific thought. For instance, one of the best modern books on Greek thought has, as its subtitle, "The Origins of the Scientific Spirit." It is on this side, particularly when dealing with the pre-Socratics, that Mr. Armstrong is, in my judgment, at his weakest. This is not, perhaps, due mainly to his religious interest. In under-estimating the scientific and exaggerating the mythological element in the early Greek thinkers he has undoubtedly been influenced by Cornford, to whom he pays a well-deserved tribute in his Preface. But, great scholar though he was, on this particular point Cornford, in my opinion, certainly went astray. On the other hand, whatever our own religious opinions may be, we have to recognize that, historically speaking, the relation of Greek philosophy to Christian thought is of the utmost importance. In most modern histories of Philosophy it tends to be unduly neglected, and to this tendency Mr. Armstrong supplies a valuable corrective.

His special approach stands him in particularly good stead in dealing with the post-Aristotelian thinkers, to whom approximately half the volume is devoted. In nearly all of this Mr. Armstrong's treatment seems to me wholly admirable, in fact, I cannot think of any book in English which treats this period more satisfactorily. We already have, of course, many excellent studies of the Stoics and the Epicureans and of Plotinus. But for a short account of these there is none better than that given by Mr. Armstrong. In addition he is able to give us unusually sympathetic and understanding accounts of more neglected thinkers such as the Middle Platonists. And in the last two or three centuries of the period he avoids the arbitrary and artificial exclusion of Christian writers from the history of Ancient Philosophy, and gives us excellent chapters on Tertullian and Origen, and above all on St. Augustine.

When we come to the third book on our list we find ourselves in a very different atmosphere. This is in the main concerned with a detailed study of the interpretation of the Idea of the Good and of the parables of the Line and the Cave in the *Republic*, in the course of which a good many theories that have been put forward in modern times are mentioned and discussed. There are also a few pages on the analysis of number into the One and the Great-and-Small, of which we hear from Aristotle. The whole treatment shows the qualities of profound scholarship, subtle powers of analysis and sound critical judgment, which we had learnt to expect of Joseph. With most of his conclusions I should find myself in general agreement. I am sure, for instance, that he was right in refusing to regard the Line as picturing "Four stages of Intelligence" or to find a close parallel between the imagery of the Line and the Cave. I should agree, too, with more confidence than he seems to have felt, that the idea of the intermediate *μεταξύτινά* had not been developed in Plato's mind at the time he wrote the *Republic*. Naturally enough there would be some points of disagreement, and on some of the familiar puzzles Joseph would not seem to have been more successful than other commentators in finding a satisfactory solution. But his views are always very well worth listening to. The only general criticism that I would venture to make is that a great deal of matter for discussion is crowded into an unduly narrow space. I cannot help feeling that the general reader would often find the book difficult and perplexing, while the specialist would be inclined to ask for something more on each point. It must be remembered, however, that the book was not written or revised for publication by Joseph himself. It is a part of a course of lectures on the *Republic*, and has been selected and edited by Mr. Hart. And we are certainly grateful to him for this work, which enables us to read a



## PHILOSOPHY

study packed with stimulating suggestions, which may help to lead us on to further study, even if the conclusions themselves can rarely be taken as the final word on the subject.

G. C. FIELD.

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*An Analysis of Volitional Life.* By C. LAMBEK. Translated from the Danish by Agnete Kortsen. (Copenhagen: Einar Munksgaard. London: Williams & Norgate Limited. Price: Dan. cr. 8.)

The main purpose of this essay is to describe certain ways in which the author believes it is possible to cultivate greater strength of character, and, thereby, to achieve greater happiness. Much importance is attached to subsidiary volitional processes, such as "automatic synthetic movements," by which more deliberate purpose and choice become possible. With better understanding of these "practical automatic relations" the individual will "master ever greater synthetic complexes at one time," and in this way his "understanding and interests will be expanded, his perseverance, endurance and patience will be increased, his mind will be more alert" (p. 24). On the basis of his analysis of volition the author advances also a coherence theory of aesthetics and a moral theory in which balance in the life of the individual himself is the dominant note. What is said about aesthetics is suggestive, but the writer is not very happy in dealing with strictly ethical questions. His view that all conduct is essentially selfish, altruism being only possible in a spurious form of pity for an imaginary self whom we place "sympathetically" in the experiences of another, has been more plausibly developed by others. One doubts very much whether this sort of question can be settled in *a priori* ways, for example by arguing that satisfaction of some desire to benefit others is reached, not by actual conferment of the benefit, but by the thought that it has been conferred. A proneness to labour the obvious, and to state in cumbersome and needlessly technical terms what could have been put very simply, is accentuated as the essay proceeds. But those who make an effort to penetrate through some obscurities of style will find matter of interest in the psychological part of this book.

One sympathizes with the translator, who seems, in the main, to have coped well with a difficult task. But there are plainly some points where her familiarity with English idiom is very uncertain. Thus we read: "It is limited how wide a multiplicity of impressions and thoughts the attention is able to embrace at one time and bring to clear consciousness" (p. 23): "Even if in no case we are able to discern the particular constitution of these tendencies, it is often possible to determine their working directions with sufficient certainty" (p. 30).

H. D. LEWIS.

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✓ *The Ground of Induction.* By DONALD WILLIAMS. (Harvard University Press, 1947. Pp. 213. Price \$3.)

Mr. Williams regards the problem of induction as the central problem of philosophy. He maintains indeed that the failure of philosophers to provide a genuine solution is dangerous to the fabric of civilization; but in saying this he surely over-estimates the practical effects of philosophical bewilderment. I have never met a scientist or a business man or a politician who was the least bit worried in his professional hours by the doubts about induction which have worried philosophers since the days of Hume, although I have known several persons in each category who could find interest and enjoyment in a discussion of the subject. Civilizations are not wrecked by perplexity over

unsolved problems of philosophy, but rather by militant faith in bad solutions; and they decay not from excess of puzzling, but from lack of intellectual interest. However that may be, Mr. Williams's book is a manful attempt to tackle the problem directly by old-fashioned methods, i.e. by showing that the conclusions of induction are highly probable in the sense that anyone who accepts them has many more chances of being right than he has of being wrong.

He begins by asserting that if  $m/n$  of the  $M$  are  $P$  and  $a$  is  $M$ , there is a probability of  $m/n$  that  $a$  is  $P$ . According to his view every significant probability statement is to be regarded as the conclusion of such a proportional syllogism. He is not deterred by the objection that there may sometimes be no assignable proportion of  $M$  things which are  $P$  because the class of  $M$  things is not finite; for he replies that we can confine our attention to finite classes without any real restriction of the scope of our discourse. This doctrine is said to be a modernization of the classic or Laplacean theory of probabilities which includes the good features of the frequency theory but avoids the difficulties of the "collective" as defined by von Mises. Having explained his general theory of probability, Mr. Williams proceeds at once to apply it to the problem of induction. His thesis is expressed shortly in the following passage (pp. 98-9): "By the ordinary proportional syllogism we were assured that if we know, for example, that the great majority of marbles in a bag are red, it is highly probable that any marble we may draw or have drawn is red. By the same principle, on a higher logical level, since we know *a priori* that the great majority of sets or protosamples which are choosable from a population are statistically similar to that population, it is highly probable that the group which we actually draw is statistically similar to it, *and hence that the population is statistically similar to the sample*. . . . Every sample, in other words, is like a chip, marked with a fractional number, drawn from a bucket of chips among which we know most of the chips are marked with the true composition of the population in which we are interested. It is by thus treating the whole sample  $MQ$  as a single chip or counter or hyper-marble in a bagful of the same that we have been able to formulate the validity of induction in terms of one straight-forward syllogistic probability. . . ."

On several occasions Mr. Williams says that his theory does not depend on any assumption about "inverse probability" and is therefore not open to the objections which may be brought against most attempts to justify induction within the theory of chances. It is true that he does not use Bayes's theorem, but he is mistaken in supposing that he has constructed his argument without the use of any inversion principle; on the contrary, he has covertly assumed an over-simplified principle for the inversion of probability statements. In the quotation above which summarizes his doctrine I have italicized the phrase which contains the fallacy. In order to make clear what has happened it is desirable to use a few special symbols. Let us write " $P(\alpha, \beta)$ " for the probability of an  $\alpha$  thing's being  $\beta$  and then introduce some Greek letters as abbreviations for certain rather cumbersome expressions of ordinary English which connote characters of sets, namely:

" $\sigma$ " for "sample from a population of  $M$  things";

" $\delta_p$ " for "drawn from a population which contains a proportion  $p$  of  $P$  things";

" $\epsilon_p$ " for "exhibiting a proportion *approximately*  $p$  of  $P$  things."

The value of these devices is that they enable us to see clearly what relations Mr. Williams asserts to hold between the characters. First of all he says that when the sample is reasonably large in relation to the size of the total popula-

## PHILOSOPHY

tion  $P(\sigma\delta_p, \epsilon_p)$  must be near to 1. This assertion can be accepted as a loose formulation of a theorem in the calculus of chances. But then he goes on to claim that with the same conditions  $P(\sigma\epsilon_p, \delta_p)$  must also be near to 1. In his presentation of the argument it is made to appear that the second assertion is merely a rewording of the first. Since it is highly probable that a sample will be "statistically similar" to the population from which it is drawn, therefore, he says, it is highly probable that a population will be "statistically similar" to a sample drawn from it. In order to justify the transition it would be necessary, however, to assume that

$$P(\sigma\delta_p, \epsilon_p) = P(\sigma\epsilon_p, \delta_p),$$

and this equation is not valid according to any general theorem of the calculus of chances. To translate back into Mr. Williams's own language, he has equated the proportion of possible samples from a population of given composition which are "statistically similar" to that population with the proportion of possible samples of given composition which originate from "statistically similar" populations—a procedure like that which he himself condemns elsewhere when writing of the practice of certain statisticians.

Although I believe that Mr. Williams's enterprise fails for the reason just stated, I do not wish to give the impression that his book is not worth reading. It is written in a lively style and contains many shrewd remarks about the views of other philosophers on probability and induction. In particular he asserts very vigorously that any logic of science which is worth the name must be strictly logical and not "a branch of psychology, shop practice, etiquette, or pragmatic morals" (p. 124). Whichever side one favours, it is always pleasing to read a straightforward attack on fashionable novelties.

WILLIAM KNEALE.

• *Reason and Experience.* By W. H. WALSH (Published by Geoffrey Cumberlege at the Clarendon Press, Oxford. Pp. vi + 260. Price 15s.)

In this book, Mr. Walsh states, examines, and criticizes some epistemological theories of empiricists and rationalists, accepting from either party, perhaps in a somewhat modified form, whatever seems to him to be true and rejecting what is false, and arriving finally at a position which, he says (p. 191) "can be characterized according to choice, as moderate rationalism or modified empiricism." The result is a book which, apart from the interest of Mr. Walsh's own views, is throughout a valuable survey of the debates on the theory of knowledge of the past three centuries for the Honours philosophy student, who has particularly lacked a short, clear and sympathetic account, in its context, of the Rationalist tradition, and many interesting suggestions on the interpretation of the classical philosophers, particularly Hume and Kant, for the professional philosopher.

Mr. Walsh starts from two extreme, and opposed, positions—a crude Empiricism which regards all our knowledge as passive sensation, limited in its extent by the limits of possible sense-experience, and validated by experimental verification, and a crude Rationalism which substitutes intuition for sense, sets no boundaries to the extent of knowledge and finds its validity in its clarity. Thus crude Empiricism limits knowledge to truths of fact, crude Rationalism to truths of reason, or at least regards perception as a confused and inferior substitute for intuition. Therefore, says Mr. Walsh (p. 16), "the issue between empiricism and rationalism can be stated baldly in the questions: (1) Are there truths of fact *and* truths of reason? and (2) if so, are truths of fact reducible to truths of reason?"

## NEW BOOKS

Mr. Walsh now gradually modifies his Empiricism and Rationalism under his own criticism. In their crude form they gave a flat "no" or "yes" to both questions; now Empiricism is made to admit that the intellect plays a part in perceptual knowledge (but as such has only a logical, not a real function as an independent source of knowledge) and further to admit that there are truths of reason—but these again are all analytic, an analytic judgment being one which (p. 41) is "true in virtue of logical laws alone." Rationalism, too, is made to give up its extreme claims of intuition by means of an interesting criticism of Hegel (Mr. Walsh, however, seems to think it a rather regrettable fact that we have not intuitive intelligences; personally I think we should accept our lack of an intellectual grasp of chairs in the same spirit as we accept our inability to read the radio or shake hands with democracy); in its place, Mr. Walsh puts synthetic *a priori* knowledge, a transcendental necessity of the Kantian kind, a set of *a priori* conditions of cognition.

On questions of comparative detail this modified Kantian Rationalism makes a good number of concessions to Empiricism in Mr. Walsh's hands. In particular the view that mathematical propositions are analytic is accepted. But there must be some synthetic *a priori* judgments, in Mr. Walsh's view. For example, the laws of logic are necessary, but they cannot be analytic if Mr. Walsh's definition of "analytic" is correct (he regards his definition as being the accepted one, and, in particular, equivalent to Professor Ayer's definition); for the laws of logic cannot be said to be true in virtue of the laws of logic. Again, the fundamental presuppositions of intuition clearly are not tautologous; nor are they synthetic *a posteriori*. So they must be synthetic *a priori* too, though Kant was not quite right in their formulation and deduction.

Mr. Walsh sees the possibility of two major attacks on his position. First there is an objection, the germ of which Mr. Walsh very interestingly finds in Hume, which concedes that there are categorical principles, but finds their origin, not in the understanding, but in the imagination or some such non-intellectual part of human nature. But Mr. Walsh is far from wishing to regard synthetic *a priori* judgments as pieces of high-powered intellectual insight. He insists that they are prescriptive (a term explained in Chap VI), not factual, and even says (p. 51) "it may even be suggested that they are not judgments at all." He therefore sees in this objection the same answer as his own, but with a different emphasis. The second objection is one which Mr. Walsh sees to be common to such different philosophers as C. I. Lewis and Collingwood, namely, that these categorical principles (absolute presuppositions) are conventional or at any rate may change from time to time and from place to place, even if their variation is outside our control. I do not find the answer given to this objection either very clear or very convincing. Mr. Walsh admits that categories do change but argues that if the Polynesian uses different categories from those used by himself "it may only be that I am thinking clearly what he thinks confusedly" (p. 188), and that "we can ask which set of such concepts it is most rational to accept" (p. 189, note 3)—which is the proper business of metaphysics. But surely it is common ground to him and to his opponents that not all sets of categories would be equally rational to accept (Professor Lewis would not regard all sets of categories as equally convenient to work with, and it is more rational, in a good sense of rational, to work with the more convenient). The whole question rests on the interpretation of "rational" and I cannot find a clear indication from Mr. Walsh how metaphysics would do its proper business in a way not approved by Professor Lewis. Mr. Walsh demands comprehensiveness, for instance, but his opponents would gladly admit the superiority of (in their jargon) a complete over a

## PHILOSOPHY

partial vocabulary. So perhaps here too Mr. Walsh differs from his opponents only in emphasis.

Because I think that this book will, rightly, be used a good deal as a textbook, I should like to use what space I have left not in giving a *précis* of the many other interesting discussions in this book, but in pointing out what I feel to be a fundamental flaw in its method.

Basically Mr. Walsh thinks that there is a sharply defined class of synthetic *a posteriori* propositions and a sharply defined class of analytical propositions. This is intended as an epistemologically important classification. One set record and predict experience (with the help of the intellect in its logical employment) and are validated by empirical verification. The other set are tautologies and are validated by the laws of logic on which they depend.

But Mr. Walsh now finds that there are propositions which fall into neither of these classes. For these propositions the name "synthetic *a priori*" is fatally available; and so we have a new class to be given a single epistemological explanation.

As a result we are asked to regard it as an epistemologically valuable procedure to classify scientific laws with "I smell a fishy smell," to classify together "Every event has a cause," "Substance persists through time," and "a is a"; and to classify "A butcher is a tradesman" with "eggs are eggs" and with " $2 + 2 = 4$ ." It seems to me that a *fundamentum divisionis* which leads to such a classification, though, of course, logically respectable, is epistemologically undesirable, however sanctified by tradition. Of course "Every event has a cause" is a very different proposition from "Every effect has a cause," or from "I smell fish," but so is a physical law very different from "I smell fish," and so is "Every event has a cause" very different from the law of contradiction, and so is "Every effect has a cause" very different from a mathematical formula.

But not only are these three pigeon-holes inappropriate ones for the objects placed in them, they will not fit some propositions at all. There are propositions of ethics and aesthetics (including ones like "You are wicked (ugly)"), performatory sentences like "I name this ship Shamrock," and unfulfilled conditionals, for example. I don't know what Mr. Walsh would do with these. Some remarks on Kant on page 231 suggest that he has views about ethical and aesthetic propositions, but he doesn't elaborate them. It seems a pity to me that this synthetic-analytic classification has been so stressed by Mr. Walsh.

Historically the book seems very sound. But surely phenomenologists would be indignant to find Mr. Walsh assimilating their view to sensibillism on page 71? Also the wording of page 14 suggests that Hume invented the empiricist analysis of causation, though Mr. Walsh presumably did not intend this. The book has a good index and is well produced. It should be a useful addition to philosophical literature.

J. O. URMSON.

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*A Philosophy of Mathematics.* By LOUIS O. KATTSOFF, Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of North Carolina. (Iowa State College Press, 1948. Pp. vii + 266. Price \$5 00.)

This work is not so much the putting forward of a specific "philosophy of mathematics" as an introduction to various philosophies of mathematics. It is stated to be based on courses of lectures given to undergraduates, and its style varies from straight pieces of prose to sections in technical symbolic logic, in various writers' notations. It begins with a discussion of the different

<sup>1</sup> Surely "Grocers are tradesmen," which I believe Mr. Walsh would regard as analytic, depends for its validity not only on laws of logic, but also on the definition of its terms?

proposed definitions of mathematics, and then passes to definitions of number—Frege, Peano, Russell, Pasch—with an introduction to Whitehead and Russell's notation. There follows a brief account of various extensions of the idea of number—negative, rational, irrational, and complex numbers—with some account of Dedekind sections. This leads to one of the most useful chapters of the book, an account of the theory of aggregates and Cantor's transfinite numbers, followed by a clear statement of the antinomies or paradoxes which appear to threaten the foundations of the Whitehead-Russell treatment of classes—the paradoxes of Burali-Forti, Richard, Russell, and Berry. The author brings out what lies at the back of these paradoxes—the questionable validity of the notion of the membership of a class by the class itself—and so he passes to Russell's theory of types. In this connection it may be pointed out that at a much earlier stage of the argument, the author's definition of the null class is beset with difficulty. He says that null is predicated of a class if for every entity  $a$  the proposition " $a$  is not an element of the class" is always valid; but obviously this is no "operational" definition of the null class, since we can never complete the testing of every entity  $a$  for non-membership. A similar objection applies to his definition of the unit class. It is indeed doubtful whether the philosophy of mathematics has been enriched or muddled by the indiscriminate use of the class-concept, for it has its limitations at both ends.

In connection with the author's examples of symbolic logic, it may be pointed out that the matrix set up by the author on p. 95 to establish the proposition  $p \& (q \& r) = (p \& q) \& r$  contains an error in the heading of one of the columns; the heading of column 3 should be  $q \& r$  and not  $p \& r$ . Two other unfortunate misprints may be mentioned which spoil the author's argument at crucial points. the arithmetical misprint on p. 72 in connection with the solution of the quadratic  $x^2 + 2x - 2 = 0$ , and the occurrence of the sign "+" instead of "?" on p. 215 in one place.

The author proceeds to substantial accounts of the three distinct ways that have been invented for developing the foundations of mathematics: (1) The logistic method (Whitehead and Russell) in which all mathematical concepts are to be derived from pure logic, (2) the axiomatic method (Hilbert) in which the main features of interest concern the choice, the consistency, the independence and the completeness of the axioms, and finally the status of the axioms, (3) the intuitionist scheme (Brouwer) in which mathematical objects are to be constructed and not merely shown to be possible, and in which there is the three-valued logic of the true, the false, and the undecidable. For each of the three methods the author gives both a descriptive "prose" introduction and an actual technical formulation of the primitive notions and procedure. These sections are admirable.

There follows an account of Gödel's Theorem—the theorem that, for any logical system  $L$ , there exist propositions undecidable in  $L$ . This account consists of two parts: a short sketch of the idea of the proof and then a detailed technical version. The author concludes his volume with chapters on "the structure of the mathematical system"; "postulational methods" (characterized by Russell, as quoted by the author, as "having the advantages of theft over honest toil"), and lastly "mathematics and reality."

The philosophy of mathematics, unlike mathematics itself, is a controversial subject. The reasons for this are various. Partly it is because the Whitehead-Russell definition of implication, with its absence of any compelling nexus between premise and conclusion, differs from implication as used in practice; partly it is because not all philosophers recognize that mathematical propositions are not pure tautologies, are synthetic as well as analytic, importing as they do the element of implication into the mere data used as premises, and

so adding to knowledge; partly it is due to the (in my opinion erroneous) attitude of some that mathematics consists of a set of marks on paper arranged and manipulated according to certain rules, thereby ignoring the relation of symbol to thing symbolized. Professor Kattsoff may be commended for having, in spite of his great learning, a healthy Philistine attitude towards all three considerations. For example, he asks how it is, on the logical positivist viewpoint, that mathematics enables us to predict events, to get knowledge of what is the case. He has a dig at all logicians—"the intimate connection between mathematics and reality is lost sight of by studying the *logical* development of the number system" (p. 246). Again, "that mathematics has some structural properties in common with reality is evidenced by every discovery predicted by mathematics. This is not refuted by arguing that experience might not have verified the prediction. The point is that it did!" (p. 246) As to the non-tautological aspect of theorems, the author remarks: "A theorem . . . makes explicit the nature of the system of axioms; . . . it brings to the mind of the mathematician material that is psychologically new" (p. 236). It is, however, not clear whether he actually accepts Whitehead and Russell's definition of implication, that  $p$  implies  $q$  is equivalent to the disjunction of "not  $p$ " and " $q$ " (cf. p. 238). The inadequacy of this concept of implication is evident in its well-known consequence, that a false proposition implies any proposition, whereas in natural science a proposition is used to infer other specific propositions on the *hypothesis* that it is true, and the possible subsequent establishment of its falsity does not affect its implications.

The isomorphism of mathematics and reality is an essential constituent of the positions of Eddington and Jeans. This is what Jeans meant by claiming that the Architect of the Universe was a mathematician. The focus of present-day interest has in fact passed away from such problems as the truth-value of a given geometry to the truth-value of a system of propositions in physics. In this connection the author's claim to have completely enumerated the objects occurring in various branches of mathematics is surely an overstatement; he includes *space* but not *time*, the concept of which is essential in any calculus treating of *change*, and so of evolution. It would be no defence to say that he is concerned only with *pure* mathematics, for he claims on p. 250 (rightly in my opinion) that there is no essential distinction between pure and applied mathematics.

But the author's concluding remarks should be given serious consideration by those who would reduce all philosophy (including mathematics as well as metaphysics) to linguistics: "To understand mathematics as a phenomenon, it is necessary to treat it dynamically, as leading to other fields. The same thing holds true of the study of reality. Mathematics is not merely a body of symbols but is a construct of humans which is evolved in a society and which has relation to empirical events. . . . To confuse or isolate syntactical, pragmatic or semantic problems in mathematics always leads either to confusion or to abstraction."

The book may be praised for its comprehensive bibliography.

E. A. MILNE.

Books also received:

✓ GEORGE P. ADAMS, *Man and Metaphysics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1948. Pp. 162. 2 dollars 50 cents.

NORDERTO BODRIO, *The Philosophy of Decadentism*. A Study of Existentialism. Translated by David Moore. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1948. Pp. viii + 60. 5s. net.

# NEW BOOKS

- GEORGE BOOLE, *The Mathematical Analysis of Logic*. (Being an Essay towards a Calculus of Deductive Reasoning.) Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1948. Pp. 82. 7s. 6d. net. (This Essay was originally published in 1847.)
- ROBERT E. D. CLARK, M.A., Ph.D. *Darwin: Before and After*. The Story of Evolution. London: The Paternoster Press. 1948. Pp. 192. 6s. net.
- KATHLEEN FREEMAN, D Litt. *Antalla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers*. A complete translation of the Fragments in Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1948. Pp. x + 162. 8s. 6d. net.
- VERGILIUS FERM. *What Can We Believe?* New York: Philosophical Library. 1948. Pp. xii + 212. 3 dollars.
- REX AND MARGARET KNIGHT. *A Modern Introduction to Psychology*. London: University Tutorial Press Ltd. 1948. Pp. 242. 7s. 6d.
- WILLIAM LILLIE. *An Introduction to Ethics*. London: Methuen & Co., Ltd. 1948. Pp. 354. 12s. 6d. net.
- S. G. SOAL. *The Experimental Situation in Psychical Research*. Being the Ninth Frederic W. H. Myers Memorial Lecture, 1947. London: The Society for Psychical Research. 1948. Pp. 64. 2s.
- JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY. *The Challenge of Schweitzer*. London: Jason Press. 1948. Pp. 133. 6s. net.
- A. D. RITCHIE. *Reflections on the Philosophy of Sir Arthur Eddington*. (The First Arthur Stanley Eddington Memorial Lecture, November 4, 1947.) With an Introduction by C. E. Raven. Cambridge University Press. 1948. Pp. 38. 2s. net.
- LUIGI BAGOLINI. *Esperienza Giuridica e Politica nel Pensiero di David Hume*. Siena: Circolo Giuridico della Università. 1947. Pp. 260. No price quoted.
- JOSEF PIEPER. *Wahrheit der Dinge*. Munich: Hegner-Bücherei, im Kösel-Verlag. 1947. Pp. 145. Price 4 80 DM.
- JOSEF PIEPER. *Musse und Kult*. Munich: Hegner-Bücherei, im Kösel-Verlag. 1948. Pp. 100. Price 3.60 DM.
- HERMANN L. GOLDSCHMIDT. *Philosophie als Dialogik*. Affoltern am Albis: Aehren Verlag. 1948. Pp. 160. No price quoted.
- ALOYS MÜLLER. *Welt und Mensch in ihrem irrationalen Aufbau*. Bonn: Ferd Dümmler's Verlag. 1947. Pp. 236. Price 8 DM.
- ALOYS MÜLLER. *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos*. Bonn: H. Bouvier u. Co. Verlag. 1948. Pp. 32. Price 1.80 DM.
- HEINZ HEIMSOETH. *Geschichtsphilosophie*. Bonn: H. Bouvier u. Co. Verlag. 1948. Pp. ca. 88. Price 3.50 DM.
- ERICH ROTHACKER. *Probleme der Kultur-Anthropologie*. Bonn: H. Bouvier u. Co. Verlag. 1948. Pp. ca. 144. Price 6.50 DM.
- DR H-C. DE SOUZA-ARAUJO. *História da Lepre no Brasil*. Volume II: Período Republicano (1889-1946). Album das Organizações Antileprosas. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Imprensa Nacional. 1948. Pp. xx + 380.
- PAUL SIWEK, S J. *Les Stigmata*. Conférence faite à l'Académie Brésilienne le 10 Octobre 1940. Extrait des "Anais da Academia Brasileira", 1944. Pp. 18.
- JEAN CAVAILLÈS. *Sur la Logique et la Théorie de la Science*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. 1947. Pp. viii + 80. No price quoted.
- BERTRAND NOGARO. *La Valeur logique des Théories économiques*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. 1947. Pp. viii + 188. No price quoted.
- DR H. DOOYEWEERD. *Transcendental Problems of Philosophic Thought*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1948. Pp. 80. Price 1 dollar 50.
- GUSTAV E. MUELLER. *Philosophy of Literature*. New York: Philosophical Library. 1948. Pp. 226. 3 dollars 50 cents.



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- EMIL FROESCHELS, M.D. *Philosophy in Wit*. New York: Philosophical Library. 1948. Pp. xiii + 61. 2 dollars 75 cents.
- LAN FREED. *Social Pragmatism*. London: Watts & Co. 1948. Pp. 264. 15s. net.
- \* RICHARD PRICE. *A Review of the Principal Questions in Morals*. Edited by D. Daiches Raphael. Oxford: at the Clarendon Press. 1948. Pp. xlvii + 302. 15s. net.
- UNIVERSIDAD DE BUENOS AIRES, FACULTAD DE FILOSOFIA Y LETRAS. *Vico y Herder*. Ensayos conmemorativos del segundo Centenario de la Muerte de Vico y del Nacimiento de Herder. Buenos Aires. 1948. Pp. 392.
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- RUDOLF W. MEYER. *Leibniz und die Europäische Ordnungskrise*. Hamburg: Hansischer Gildenverlag. 1948. Pp. 320. Price 9.80 D.M.
- JOSEPH L. BLAU, Ed. *Social Theories of Jacksonian Democracy*. New York: Hafner Publishing Company. 1947. Pp. xxviii + 383. No price quoted.
- WILLIAM JAMES. *Essays in Pragmatism*. New York: Hafner Publishing Company. 1948. Pp. xvi + 176. Price 90 cents.
- \* CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD, Ed. *Vedanta for the Western World*. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 1948. Pp. 452. 16s. net.
- \* JEAN WAHL. *The Philosopher's Way*. London: O.U.P.: Cumberlege. 1948. Pp. xiv + 334. 21s. net.
- JEAN-PAUL SARTRE. *The Emotions*. Outline of a Theory. New York: Philosophical Library. 1948. (Trans. Bernard Frechtman.) Pp. 97. \$2.75.
- MILTON R. KONVITZ AND ARTHUR E. MURPHY, Eds. *Essays in Political Theory presented to George H. Sabine*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York. 1948. Pp. viii + 333. \$4.00.
- \* BERTRAND RUSSELL. *Human Knowledge. Its Scope and Limits*. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 1948. Pp. 538. 18s.
- A. A. LUCE, D.D., Litt.D., Ed. *The Works of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne*. Volume I. Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd. 1948. Pp. viii + 279. 30s.
- HENRY W. STEIGER. *Christian Science and Philosophy*. New York: Philosophical Library. 1948. Pp. ix + 234. \$3.75.
- DANE RUDHYAR. *Modern Man's Conflicts*. New York: Philosophical Library. 1948. Pp. viii + 228. \$3.75.
- H. J. BLACKHAM. *Stanton Coit—Selections from his Writings*. London: Favil Press, Ltd. 1948. Pp. 92. No price quoted.
- MARTIN BUBER. *Hasidism*. New York. Philosophical Library. 1948. Pp. 208. \$3.75.
- SHRI AUROBINDO. *La Bhagavad-Gita*. Trans. by Camille Rao & Jean Herbert. Preface by Jean Herbert. Volume I of *Oeuvres Completes*. Albin Michel. 1948. Pp. 472. 480 francs.
- JEAN HERBERT. *Spiritualité Hindoue*. Editions Albin Michel. 1948. Pp. 471. No price quoted.
- \* JOHN LAIRD. *On Human Freedom*. Allen & Unwin. 1948. Pp. 152. 7s. 6d.
- G. W. KEETON AND G. SCHWARZENBERGER, Ed. *Current Legal Problems* 1948. London: Stevens & Sons. 1948. Pp. vii + 248. 17s. 6d.
- PAUL CLAUDEL. *Poetic Art*. New York: Philosophical Library. 1948. Pp. 150. \$2.75.
- MORITZ SCHLICK. *Grundzüge der Naturphilosophie*. Vienna: Gerold & Co. 1948. (Reprint.) Pp. x + 115. No price stated.
- MORITZ SCHLICK. *Gesetz, Kausalität und Wahrscheinlichkeit*. Vienna: Gerold & Co. 1948. (Reprint.) Pp. 115. No price stated.

## CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE EDITOR OF *Philosophy*

DEAR SIR,

There is one passage in Mr. Mabbott's interesting analysis of the Conflict of Ideologies which should not pass without challenge.

He says (p. 202, top): "Christians do not now believe that their government has a duty to propagate Christianity by political methods throughout the world. There is no reason why any Communist should believe this of Communism."

The conclusion in the last sentence overlooks a vital dilemma of Communism. Its essence was indicated in the reply made by Stalin at the 18th Communist Congress in March, 1939 to those slightly disgruntled disciples who were asking why the State had not "died." The death of the State was, of course, Marx's solution of the problem of individual liberty in a Communist society. It must, of course, be obvious that a State which undertakes all responsibility for production in the modern sense cannot possibly "die." It is also obvious that those who represent the State, i.e. the ruling oligarchy, do not intend to let it die. But they have to find a palatable reason for its continued existence. Stalin gave it. He said (paraphrased): "You must understand that when Marx said the State would 'die' he was contemplating a world which had become entirely Communist. Until that has happened the State is necessary for defence. Therefore, until all the world has become Communist you cannot have perfect Communism anywhere."

(The statement is quoted in my article in the *National Review* of April 1941, and is referred to in the Report on Strategy and Tactics of World Communism issued by the United States Embassy.)

It will be seen then that this interpretation of the situation, convenient for the ruling oligarchy, provides a strong urge for the idealistic Communist to press on by every means with the process of converting the whole of mankind to his faith.

Yours faithfully,

A. S. ELWELL-SUTTON.

August 7, 1948.

## INSTITUTE NOTES

The following lectures have been arranged for the Lent Term 1949:

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Friday, January 21st.            | "The Ethics of Liberalism and the Ethics of Socialism."<br>W. B. Gallie, M.A. (University College of Swansea). |
| Friday, February 25th.           | "The Human Person in Contemporary Philosophy."<br>The Rev F. C. Copleston, S.J., M.A.                          |
| Friday, March 18th.              | "The Life of Reason." Professor C. A. Campbell (University of Glasgow).  |
| Friday, April 29th               | "The Relevance of Psychical Research to Philosophy."<br>Professor C. D. Broad (University of Cambridge).       |
|                                  | EVENING MEETING (at University College)  |
| Wednesday, March 23rd. 7 30 p.m. | "The General Will and the Will of All." D. J. Allan, M.A. (University of Edinburgh).                           |

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[Suggested]

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHIATRY    PROFESSOR AUBREY LEWIS, M.D., F.R.C.P . . . . .	99
II INTUITION IN CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY.    REV. G. C. STEAD, M.A . . . . .	118
III FREEDOM, DISCIPLINE AND BONDAGE    MAURICE CRAN- STON, B.A . . . . .	133
IV PERSONALITY AND LIBERTY    OLAF STAPLEDON . . . . .	144
V. PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY: PHILOSOPHY IN ITALY . . . . .	157
VI. NEW BOOKS . . . . .	159
VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTICES . . . . .	191
VIII INSTITUTE NOTES . . . . .	192

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# PHILOSOPHY

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## PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHIATRY

PROFESSOR AUBREY LEWIS, M.D., F.R.C.P.

I AM grateful for the honour of being invited to give the second Manson Lecture. Dr. Manson believed that the study of sick people leads into the widest fields of thought, but that increasing specialization within medicine diverts the doctor from seeing man and his nature whole: the chief question seems to be (he wrote in 1930), "whether medicine is in the bondship of practice, whether it is a skilled art, or whether it can emerge to give its own contribution to abstract thought and philosophy."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, pleading with doctors to join this Institute of Philosophy, he declared that medicine should be the most philosophic of the professions. In this he was reviving an ancient claim: the arguments for it have lately been restated with much Aristotelian piety by Scott Buchanan. Now here I find myself in a difficulty at the outset: I am to speak of the relationship between philosophy and medicine, at a lecture founded by a passionate believer in their conjunction, yet I am engaged in a particular branch of medicine which was for longer than any other preoccupied with philosophy and dependent on it, but had so little profit from its fidelity that it reckons progress from the time when it struggled away from this allegiance. Psychiatry has not been able to refrain since then from many a backward glance at the older philosophy she once swore by, and she has been much influenced by the philosophies of later times. She has—doubtless in punishment for her defection—become entangled now and then in bad, unrecognized philosophy of her own making. She has, at all events, never achieved more than a temporary indifference to philosophic thought. She has, moreover, this signal virtue, that she tries constantly to avoid the tyranny of a limited specialization: she seeks to occupy herself with man in his whole nature, body and mind together. Her faults are, on the

<sup>1</sup> *British Medical Journal*, 1930, No. 2, p. 266.

## PHILOSOPHY

whole, much the same as the faults of philosophy—schematization without sufficient evidence, uncritical trust in the adequacy of language, and contention because the contenders do not agree about their axioms or fail to make them explicit.

I shall therefore consider first how it has come about that psychiatrists, who of all doctors might be expected most to value philosophic training and thought, do not as a rule think much of philosophy. I shall then speak of some psychiatric observations on certainty, and their relevance to the intuitive knowledge or self-evident propositions on which philosophers have built so much. Insight and knowledge of self have an intimate bearing on certainty, and I shall refer to depersonalization as a striking disorder of self-knowledge, which also raises the inevitable question of the interrelation of body and mind. Finally I shall speak of the closely connected question of the nature of consciousness, viewed from a psychiatrist's standpoint.

The connection between psychiatry and philosophy was, as I have said, intimate for many centuries. There are strong reasons in the nature of psychiatry why this should be so. The psychiatrist has to ponder on the relation of mind to body, in resolving the clinical problems of every patient he sees; he must address himself to questions of value whenever he has to decide whether a patient has become healthy after he has been ill, or whether a particular disturbance of mental activity is a sign of illness; if he is at all reflective, he must examine the validity and limitations of human knowledge, gained through means upon which he relies for his understanding of himself and his patients, while at the same time recognizing how deceived those patients can be when they too rely upon such means of knowledge; and, finally, the problem of causation is thrust on his notice so insistently that even the most unsophisticated psychiatrist is aware that common sense will hardly serve his turn here. The psychiatrist then is confronted, whether he likes it or not, with many of the central issues of philosophy. It might be expected that he would therefore value a philosophical training. But this is far from being the case: he philosophizes as best he can with little or no help from the schools; or he denies that he has any concern with philosophy; for him it is not charming, nor for that matter harsh and crabbed, but just useless. Such an attitude is not limited to those innocent of philosophic discipline. Of living philosophers, the only one, I think, who has been a psychiatrist of note is Karl Jaspers: and Jaspers, in his well-known book on *Psychopathology*,<sup>1</sup> writes that thorough philosophical study has no positive value for the psychopathologist, except in fitting him to meet methodological objections. It has, he

<sup>1</sup> *Allgemeine Psychopathologie*, von Karl Jaspers, 3te Auflage, Berlin, 1923. p. 12.

goes on, a further negative value in that by it he is protected against many formulations, superfluous discussions and clogging prejudices "die bei unphilosophischen Köpfen in der Psychopathologie—dem Gegenstand dieser Wissenschaft entsprechend—nicht selten eine Rolle spielen." Yet even this grudging credit is withdrawn in an ensuing passage in small print which says that those who make valuable discoveries often state them badly so that by formal logic the new statements can be shown to be contradictory and incorrect; therefore, says Jaspers, a philosophical training can be damaging rather than helpful for those who must be alive to fresh points of view in such a field as psychopathology. Evidently Jaspers the psychopathologist has had little help from Jaspers the philosopher.

The psychiatrist's desire to reject or ignore philosophy is closely paralleled in the history of psychology. During the many centuries when psychology was a branch of philosophic thought, it remained sterile, and later suffered in comparison with the emancipated natural sciences. Psychiatry, whose progress depends so much on psychology, was in similar straits, and the intuitive or deductive approach to its problems yielded little of value except systems of classification. The best that a kindly historian can say is that "the influence of philosophy on psychiatry is indisputable and yet imperceptible, almost elusive. Abstract philosophy and introspective psychology remained united. Consequently . . . (the) contribution to psychology was more methodological than substantial. . . . Summarizing the keen speculations of the philosophical psychologies of the seventeenth century we may say that they did give the spontaneous, empirical orientation of the physician a certain dignity of philosophical depth. Introspection . . . and empirical descriptions of various details of human behaviour became the substance of psychiatry."<sup>1</sup> This view is somewhat superficial, for psychiatry was materially furthered through its impregnation by philosophic ideas but the advance made during the eighteen hundred years in which it was yoked to philosophy and theology were small in comparison with those of the last hundred and fifty.

There is, moreover, a widespread belief among psychiatrists, as among other empiricists, that the "creativity of a thought does not depend on its being truthful or even reasonable." Hence their readiness to accept irrational or naïve hypotheses which lead to useful action, especially in treatment: for example, the theoretical assumptions upon which Egas Moniz based his operation of prefrontal leucotomy for mental disorder. The complaisant attitude of the "eclectic" psychiatrist towards diverse systems of psychopathology

<sup>1</sup> *A History of Medical Psychology*, by Gregory Zilboorg, London, 1941, p. 274



## PHILOSOPHY

is another instance of pragmatism and, often, of lack of consistency: whereas in everything somatic and quantitative many such psychiatrists have strict requirements, in the field of "dynamic psychology" they give way to despair and ask of a method only "does it work?" and of a theory only "is it consistent within itself?"

Some psychiatrists have interested themselves more in philosophers than in philosophy. Speculative systems, it has often been said, have more to do with the personality and even the mental illnesses of the philosopher who propounds them than with the world as it really is: they are, in short, his illusory projections of himself upon the larger screen. The pathographers, as they have been called, of Schopenhauer, Fechner and other philosophers labour to demonstrate this. Since the constant aim of the natural sciences, in which doctors are trained, is to minimize or eliminate subjective bias in observing and interpreting the world, the more the personality and individual experiences of the philosopher are seen to colour his system, the poorer the opinion the doctor has of it as knowledge. Such summary judgment is clearly faulty, and would be improper in the psychiatrist, of all people. The philosopher, like everyone else, is, at any age, the product of his heredity and all the passing accidents of his life, and it is futile to hope that his thoughts can ever be separated from what he is. Much of his thought may have been recognizably coloured and shaped by illness and misfortune, or by some happy concurrence of events, and it is surely profitable to discern this. Perhaps I can illustrate this influence by a very simple instance taken from the writings of Kant. Kant, as you know, was interested in the nature and forms of mental disease, and in one of his lesser-known writings<sup>1</sup> says of depressive hypochondria "I have paid attention only to its mental manifestations, without wanting to look into its roots, which really lie in the body, and have their chief seat in the organs of digestion rather than in the brain. . . . These sad discomforts, as long as they are not hereditary, have a fair prospect of recovery; and the man whose help is chiefly to be sought in them is the physician. Still, for the honour of my faculty, I should not like to exclude the philosopher, who could prescribe the right mental diet—on condition, that is, that he take no payment for his services." Much later, in his *Anthropologie*, 1798, he returned to this question and put forward his well-known classification of mental diseases, based on the conceptions of mental structure and function which played so important a part in his philosophy. In this classification he gives much importance to Hypochondria (*Grillenkrankheiten*), which he described with much particularity, and insists, as he had twenty years before, that it is caused by bodily changes especially in the stomach. The clue to his concern with this question and the explanation

<sup>1</sup> *Versuch über die Krankheiten des Kopfes*, 1764.

tion for his error may be found in another of his writings<sup>1</sup> where he gives a scrap of autobiography: "Because of my flat and narrow chest which affords too little room for the movement of my heart and lungs, I have a natural disposition to hypochondria, which in earlier years made me weary of life. But the reflection that the cause of this oppression of my heart was perhaps only a mechanical matter and was irremovable, brought me to the point of disregarding it: so that whilst I felt the oppression in my chest, in my head there was peace and cheerfulness which I could communicate to others, when in company. . . . I still have the oppression, for the cause lies in my bodily structure<sup>2</sup> but I have mastered its influence on my thoughts and actions, by turning my attention away from it as though it were no concern of mine." And a little later, in the same paper, he illuminates his metaphor of 1764 about the philosopher prescribing die Diät des Gemüts, for he now remarks "Thinking is a nutriment without which a scholar cannot live, when he is awake and alone."

I have dwelt upon this simple instance of dangerous dependence upon personal experience because its very crudity drives home the likelihood that in more subtle and remote ways also the thoughts of a Kant, and of any philosopher, are significantly influenced, perhaps distorted, by his personal circumstances and constitution. It is, at any rate, an assumption of psychiatry, with its present genetic bias, that you may have to study the inheritance, and the upbringing and daily life of a man if you would understand his mental products. This is not to say that it is thus you assess their value.

So much for the attitude which the majority of psychiatrists, I think, have adopted towards philosophers and philosophy. I doubt whether philosophers, on their side, have paid much attention to psychiatry. Yet it is scarcely to be denied that the phenomena which the psychiatrist studies throw light on many questions of great interest to philosophy, especially those touching on theory of knowledge. The psychiatrist has to attend to disorders of belief, errors of perception and reasoning. His clinical experience sometimes enlightens, sometimes clouds his understanding of writings on philosophy. When he reads, "je jugeai que je pouvais prendre pour règle générale que les choses que nous concevons fort clairement et fort distinctement sont toutes vraies,"<sup>3</sup> he is reminded of all the people he has seen who if they applied this to themselves, would have assuredly fallen into error<sup>4</sup> and his painful doubt is not relieved when he reads on "il y a seulement quelque difficulté à bien remarquer quelles sont celles que nous concevons distinctement"<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Der Streit der Facultäten in drei Abschnitten*, 1798 Dritter Abschnitt, § 1 and 4

<sup>2</sup> *Discours de la Méthode*, Descartes, Quatrième Partie

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

## PHILOSOPHY

No doubt it will be replied that Descartes was here speaking for himself and for other men of intact philosophic mind; it would be absurd to suppose that he maintained that simpletons and madmen as well as ordinary human beings could recognize truth in those things which they conceive very clearly and very distinctly. This would perhaps be the end of the psychiatrist's difficulty, if all men could indeed be divided into philosophers, ordinary human beings, simpletons and madmen. But the psychiatrist early learns an important lesson about men's minds; that there are no sharp qualitative divisions which separate wise men from fools, or rational men from lunatics. Descartes was seeking to determine what it is that gives him the conviction of certainty about the proposition "I think, therefore I am": a personal quest and a personal certainty. The certainty about truth arising, as Descartes says, from a very clear and very distinct conception, may be found in many people manifestly insane and in many people who are mentally healthy yet whose certainty is in part subject to the same determinants as that of the insane, and is correspondingly attached to a false proposition.

Certainty, or conviction, has been studied, though not very fully, in relation to belief, especially religious belief. William James, agreeing with Bagehot that conviction carries intense emotion with it, pointed out that it might be pathologically exalted "as in the nitrous oxide intoxication in which a man's very soul will sweat with conviction,"<sup>1</sup> but that "as Descartes made the indubitable reality of the cogito go bail for the reality of all that the cogito involved, so we all of us, feeling our own present reality with absolutely coercive force, ascribe an all but equal degree of reality, first to whatever things we lay bold on with a sense of personal need and second to whatever farther things continuously belong with these."<sup>2</sup> I shall return to this presently when I come to speak of depersonalization.

The reasons for the cartesian rejection of sensory data—because they may deceive us (men being subject to notorious error through illusions)—are equally reasons for rejecting the cartesian assertion that our thinking is an empirical certainty: about our thinking we may as unwittingly be certain yet mistaken as about our sensations. What Locke called "bare intuition, without the intervention of any other idea"<sup>3</sup> is common in mental disorder: and what he said of this kind of knowledge "the clearest and most certain that human frailty is capable of" applies perfectly to what patients experience in respect of their "primary delusions": this knowledge is "irresistible and like bright sunshine forces itself to be perceived, as soon as ever

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Psychology*, by Wm. James, vol. 2, p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 297.

<sup>3</sup> *Essay on Human Understanding*, Book IV, Chap. 2, § 1.

the mind turns itself that way, and leaves no room for hesitation, doubt or examination, but the mind is presently filled with the clear light of it."<sup>1</sup> These words of Locke's are very close to those which patients use when they tell us of what they know with absolute certainty, requiring no proof: truth suddenly and decisively made clear to them in an immediate intuition. But Locke, whom I have been quoting, takes up this difficulty when he comes to write about enthusiasm: he uses almost the same words to describe the false certainties of the enthusiast as he had for the intuitive certainty upon which truth partly rests: "When once they are got into this way of immediate revelation, of illumination without search, and of certainty without proof, and without examination, it is a hard matter to get them out of it. Reason is lost upon them; they are above it; they see the light infused into their understandings, and cannot be mistaken; it is clear and visible there, like the light of bright sunshine; shows itself and needs no other proof but its own evidence."<sup>2</sup> In rebutting the claims of the enthusiasts that the truth is revealed to them, he undermines, I think, the original assertion about intuitively known truth: "light, true light, in the mind is or can be nothing else but the evidence of the truth of any proposition; and if it be not a self-evident proposition, all the light it has, or can have, is from the clearness and validity of those proofs upon which it is received." All then turns on the distinction between self-evident propositions, intuitively known, and those arrived at by reason or sense. But no one can determine what is self-evident except him to whom it is so: and much that is false appears self-evident to the healthy man, and still more to the mentally sick man. Professor Stace, in his recent provocative article about unreasoned beliefs in *Mind*, classed together under this head "instinctive beliefs" about the material world, declarations of "common sense" about sundry matters, moral "intuitions," metaphysical "insights," the procedures of mathematical infant prodigies, and the "flairs" and "hunches" of common men in all matters;<sup>3</sup> and he deplored the lack of empirical material which would afford a proper psychological description and analysis of the process whereby such unreasoned beliefs are reached. He is emphatic that unreasoned beliefs, held to be immediate intuitions, play a large and harmful part in the thought of philosophers, and of ordinary people. If psychology is to illuminate the process, as he wishes, it cannot ignore the extreme instances which the psychiatric clinic offers. Targowla and Dublneau, in their monograph give a telling account of the phenomenon: "il se révèle d'un seul coup, complet et total, dans un éclair qui brusque la réflexion, lui jette les données d'une réalisation, mais en bloc. . . .

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on Human Understanding*, Book IV, Chap. 2, § 1

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Book IV, Chap. 19, § 8

<sup>3</sup> *Mind*, 1945, No. 54, p. 138

## PHILOSOPHY

Cette intuition, du fait qu'elle est, ne comporte pas, ne suppose même pas la discussion. Elle ne comprend aucune perception et élimine par là la nécessité du raisonnement. . . . Il n'y a pas de preuve à fournir appuyant la réalité ou la signification de constations, pas de rapport à établir. . . . Les preuves qu'il ne cherche pas, le malade les refuse aux autres; il n'essaie pas de convaincre: Ne me demandez pas d'explication; je le sais . . . mais puisque je vous dis que c'est une intuition. Surgissant spontanément à la conscience sans intermédiaire sensoriel ou intellectuel, 'synthétique et directe,' l'intuition fournit une connaissance pure, parfaite d'emblée, précise. . . ."<sup>1</sup> It is undeniable that to the patient experiencing them, whatever his intellectual level, these intuitions are self-evident truths; truths beyond doubt. The distinction Locke draws between the convictions of the enthusiast and the intuitive truths of the philosopher can hardly be sustained here. Self-evident "truths," however definite and clear, may be as false as demonstrative beliefs arrived at through erroneous reasoning. And this falsity can be found, not only in the intuitive knowledge of the insane but also, though less dramatically, in that of the neurotic subject—the hypochondriac, for example, or the depersonalized patient. It is moreover common as a sign of deficit, as in the patient recently reported by Babcock<sup>2</sup> who had had a prefrontal leucotomy and was absolutely certain he was correct in his answers to psychological tests—largely, it would seem, from lack of any critical judgment. What determines this self-deception through certainty in the various sorts of mental illness has not, I think, been sufficiently ascertained, though in the individual patient the influence of emotions and needs can be discerned: there are, however, as I said, sufficient points of identity between these phenomena in the mentally ill and those observed in healthy people, to justify the conclusion that some of the same causes of distortion operate in the healthy and the sick.

It may be said that the healthy man has insight into the falsity of his intuitions, whereas the sick man has not. But although this is true in the extreme cases, it is by no means true of the greater number of those false thoughts which we experience with such immediacy and certainty that we cannot doubt them when they first occur. Perfect insight, in the clinical use of the term, is indeed a fiction: it can never be wholly realized, since there is no means of determining for a particular man what is the "correct" or "healthy" attitude towards his own perceptions and thoughts; yet every judgment of insight presupposes first, that we can know or infer what a man's attitude is towards his own mental events, and secondly that we have a standard against which we can range this

<sup>1</sup> *L'Intuition Délirante*, R. Targowla et J. Dublineau, Paris, 1931, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> *Jour. Abn. and Soc. Psychol.*, 1947, No. 42, p. 470.

attitude. What we commonly do, in clinical practice, is: we accept communicated introspections at face value, and we compare the patient's attitude to the content of these with our own; we compare it with what, from previous instances and observation, we believe would be our attitude if we were like the patient in everything except his mental ill-health. Clearly this is to attempt the impossible and the attempt is not made any more respectable because a feat resembling it can be crudely and confidently performed whenever a patient reports patent absurdities to us with evident conviction. All that we can say is that certainty may accompany mental events which lead to a false proposition about the external world, or to a false proposition about the subject himself. The falsity of the proposition may, however, lie in its verbal statement: for example, it is not uncommon for people in an attack of acute anxiety to feel certain that they are about to die: this is a direct experience, reported in what is ostensibly a false statement about the immediate future of their physical body, but is actually a true statement about their present feeling—which can only thus in part be conveyed to us or verbally expressed to themselves. It is therefore proper to say that certainty may accompany a mental event of which the account seems to the listener to contain a false statement, because the resources of the subject's language are insufficient to express it adequately or because his experience is unique or novel and communicable only in approximations such as metaphor and analogy provide. To say, then, that the subject lacks insight because the statement is false is in such cases to give insight a superficial meaning. But there are convictions which arise suddenly and clearly and are indisputably false—for instance, a conviction that the physician is putting obscene words into the patient's mind. Here it may justly be concluded that the patient's insight is faulty (if we judge his insight by his awareness of existing relationships between objects and himself) is it possible for the insight of a healthy man likewise to be at fault in respect of a thought which comes to him with certainty and great clearness? I believe so, though in him the correction through reasoning may follow almost at once. Leaving aside religious experience, with the absolute certainty of its ecstasies—an appeal to which might be thought to beg the question—there is ample evidence of the sudden rise of mistaken beliefs of love and hate, accompanied by certainty, in healthy people—convictions that reflect their wishes and fears, their unsatisfied needs and unrecognized conflicts. I think it is plain that in these matters there is no sharp division between the mentally healthy and the mentally unhealthy; and that in the mentally unhealthy we can see very gross examples of undue doubt and undue certainty, such as we see also, though much less often and less manifestly, in healthy people the *folie du*

*doute* of the obsessional patient is in this respect as continuous with the "normal," as is the *intuition délirante* of the schizophrenic. It is, however, the case that psychiatrists have been far more ready to admit that excessively misplaced doubt occurs in healthy people regarding true propositions than to recognize that misplaced certainty occurs in the healthy regarding false intuitions.

What I have been saying about the deceptiveness of immediate certainty could be amply illustrated by the morbid perceptual phenomena which the psychiatrist meets. The patient with acute alcoholic hallucinosis, for example, may have no doubt whatever about the insulting voice he heard, and his certainty may persist after he has recovered from his illness. But the problems of perception are too difficult, and, in many ways, too well-explored in psychology and philosophy as well as in psychiatry, to deal with briefly. Perception has, in psychology and psychiatry, passed of late through phases far removed from the traditional philosophical standpoint. Perception was accounted for until fairly recently in terms of sensation and association, but now perceptions are viewed as organized mental structures, selectively taken from the unstructured stimulus field. Perception is not isolated from affect and memory: as F. C. Bartlett put it, "inextricably mingled with it are imaging, valuing, and those beginnings of judging which are involved in the response to plan, order of arrangement and construction of presented material. It is directed by interest and by feeling, and may be dominated by certain crucial features of the objects and scenes dealt with." The psychiatrist by no means regards hallucinations as essentially distinguishable from delusions, from states of feeling, memories or fantasies: he has given up the exclusively atomistic and reductive approach to mental functions. He recognizes the inseparability of events which it may be convenient to classify as cognitive, affective, and conative. He sees also that the patterns imposed by social institutions and human relationships provide a frame of reference or anchorage for subsequent mental activities (including acts of perception): consequently he cannot examine with any fullness the delusions, hallucinations or other symptoms of a patient unless he also looks closely into the patient's personality—that unitary synthesis and outcome of all the past impacts of the environment upon inherited potentialities. This idiographic approach to personality which the psychiatrist adopts, brings up the problem of how to understand the individual, to which Dilthey and Spranger paid so much attention. Consequently some influential psychiatrists have laid great stress on the distinction between causal explanation and psychological understanding of personality. Jaspers, who gave this currency, insisted that in psychology phenomenological study permits true causal sequences to be discerned; these cannot all be

## PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHIATRY

understood. The genetic understanding of psychological phenomena requires no theoretical foundation, as explanation does; it is concerned only with immediate data, and, indispensable though it is, it may lead the investigator into error because an understood relation need not be a real or a constant one. The teaching of Jaspers has had much influence on psychiatrists everywhere: but in this country the violently opposed psychoanalytic theory, in which genetic understanding is all-important, has prevailed over it, so that even those who are not psychoanalysts mostly accept in their psychopathology the view that understood relations are the true ones, or at any rate are the ones they will "work with": the non-analysts, in conceding this, concede a deficiency in themselves, since they lack the fuller "understanding through trained experience" which is conferred by a personal psychoanalysis—though whether this specially acquired understanding would be regarded as understanding by Jaspers is questionable. In any case, the psychiatrist's clinical material is often such as to put understanding beyond his reach: even if a personal psychoanalysis has made familiar or certain to him sequences which to others are strange and dubious, there will still be much in his patient's symptoms and their succession which cannot be paralleled and understood from his own immediate experience.

Knowledge of one's own personality is necessarily partial: yet it is the starting point for all our understanding of the personality of others. "Of the whole of our own natures we are never directly aware, nor of any large portion of the whole. At any single moment the range of consciousness is remarkably slight. It seems only a restless pencil point of light entirely insufficient to illuminate the edifice of personality. Yet, for all its feebleness, it provides each of us with the one and only sure criterion of our personal experience and identity. The past is drawn out in successive and overlapping conscious moments, backwards, twenty, thirty or forty years to early childhood, and the future extends, vaguely, but still intimately, before us in each overlapping moment of planning and imagination. It is through this dovetailing of the successive moments of consciousness with imbrication of temporal reference and content that we arrive at the conviction that we do somehow possess consistent personalities surrounding the momentary conscious core."<sup>1</sup> This self-consciousness, upon which so much depends, is curiously perverted in "depersonalization," a morbid state which merits our further attention. Here normal assurance of the continuity of personality is lost: "I am a stranger to myself . . . I have stopped being . . . I am not the same person that I was before." Such feelings as these are fairly common; they are often accompanied by privation of

<sup>1</sup> *Personality*, by G. W. Allport, London, 1937, p. 159.



bodily awareness and of affection, and—more significantly for my theme—by a morbid detachment. Thus a patient will say “I suddenly realized I was me. I suddenly got outside myself and saw myself. I am since then absolutely conscious of being conscious.” Or she may say “everything I do reminds me of ‘her,’ that is, of myself (as I was). All the time the galling pictures of all ‘she’ did and what ‘she’ was going to do and all ‘she’ has in the world to live for, are driving me to floods of hopeless misery and anger.” “I am analysing myself on the surface all the time, but there is nothing underneath.” In these phenomena the subjective core, the continuous thread running through all our conscious states has been destroyed, and with it much else goes—the just appreciation of time, the capacity to picture absent people or places, and—most striking of all in many such patients—the perception of the outside world as real is also impaired, the meaning of things is lost. This suggests a tempting speculation: if a few philosophers had had this syndrome—as Amiel did—and produced their philosophical works while suffering from it, no doubt their systems, or at all events their epistemological arguments, would be different from those we know; psychiatrists with a metaphysical bent might wonder whether depersonalization is not a *reductio ad absurdum* of extreme subjectivism. But I do not know of any detailed philosophical consideration of this remarkable syndrome, which is compatible with intellectual lucidity and objectively accurate perception of physical attributes. It may be thought that what occurs only in disease is hardly the concern of the philosopher. I doubt if there is any force in such an argument. The gradations between health and disease are not abrupt; depersonalization may occur, for a brief space, in healthy people, and the feeling of change in one’s own personality can occur, for example, at puberty, without any other suggestion of mental illness. The symptoms of disease, moreover, are as much part of the phenomenal world as anything else, and might deserve as much regard from the philosopher as he gives to other philosophers’ introspections. It is surely a defect in the thought of philosophers if they draw their ontological conclusions only from data provided by the operations of presumed healthy minds.

Depersonalization brings forward, as almost all psychiatric problems do, the inescapable question about the relation of body and mind. Here is a condition that often comes on abruptly, bringing with it profound changes in the consciousness of self and especially in the perception of one’s body. It has been known to occur in patients with physical disease, epilepsy, tumour of the brain, encephalitis, cerebral arterio-sclerosis. It is almost identical with the state that can be produced deliberately in healthy people by giving them a drug, mescaline, which has its action largely on the brain.

The assumption, therefore, is often made that this syndrome must have its physical substrate in the brain. But the methods of morbid anatomy show no disease in the brains of these patients; therefore the change is assumed to be "physiological" or "metabolic": no constant physiological accompaniment being demonstrated, it is assumed that although the abnormality as yet eludes our crude methods of investigation, there must nevertheless be some eventually detectable chemical or physical abnormality of the brain. Tenacious indeed is the faith of the psychiatrists who think like this. They are offset by other psychiatrists who regard such speculations and hopes as profitless, and who search in mental structure and function for the pathology of this disorder: these have the advantage—if it can be called so—that their method and theory make it almost impossible for them to fail to discover underlying abnormalities which can be related to the symptoms.

It is obvious that a preference for somatic or for psychological explanation of depersonalization depends on something other than direct evidence about the pathology of the condition. Depersonalization therefore affords a better example of the implicit attitude of psychiatrists to the body-mind problem than a disorder like agnosia or aphasia which is due to demonstrable damage to parts of the brain. A large number of psychiatrists, perhaps the majority of us, profess a monistic view, while talking the language of dualism. It is easy to see how this comes about. We have had a medical training in which it is constantly stressed that study of the functions of the body and its structure in varying circumstances has been the indispensable condition of advance in knowledge. In psychiatry we find this standpoint seemingly tenable when we are dealing with the numerous mental disorders that accompany disease of the brain (such as the syphilitic condition, dementia paralytica). But there are other considerations forced on us, which are by no means new in medicine and in the sciences on which medicine stands, but which until lately the medical student was often allowed to ignore. The integration of bodily activities, reminding us that physiological statements about the functions of parts may be incomplete; the occurrence of severe mental disturbances without any discoverable physical or chemical change in the body, which yet disappear after physical interference with the body, for example, by electrically induced convulsions; the association of emotion with bodily changes, and of temperament with physique—all these make it hard for the dogmatic materialist in psychiatry—and hard, too, for the dogmatic idealist. The newcomer to psychiatry finds, moreover, that the prevalent psychopathology makes use of an abstruse language in which mature somatic phenomena and functions are neglected, though those of the infant are heavily drawn upon. It is true that the

## PHILOSOPHY

teacher of physiology will have drawn the medical student's attention to the work of Cannon and Sherrington, and that the psychoanalyst will press for psychological study of all disease; but the two languages are far apart though often used in the same discourse. Urged to examine and denote his philosophical position, the psychiatrist may range himself as idealist or materialist without too nice a regard for consistency; or he may declare his monistic belief that man is a "psychosomatic unity." The psychosomatic unit is made up of integrated parts, describable in differing language according to the hierarchical level of the integration: "the concepts of mental and physical must undergo a readjustment . . . science deals with a world of things, facts and relations appearing in several distinct levels or types of integration. Physics deals with one set of aspects . . . chemistry with another . . . physiology with a biological level, that is, those objects and their parts which grow by reproduction and metabolism; and as psychobiology we treat the functions of total organisms which blend, with more or less consciousness, in a manner constituting a special level of integration which has been especially and most characteristically enriched by the interindividual and social development of language. . . . All that constitutes psychobiology to the physician is therefore physical as well as mental. We can further recognize an ultrabiological level of facts when we consider the products of such functioning, as logic and mathematics or theory of relations. . . . In this way we obtain an orderly perspective of the various sciences, but eliminate the contrast between physical and mental."<sup>1</sup> I have been quoting from a manifesto by the most influential American psychiatric teacher of his day, Adolf Meyer, in which he also said "each individual has his own mental activity, but to say that we cannot see it and make it accessible and understand it in others is a philosopher's scare like the statement that we can never know whether the world exists because we know only mental states or processes. . . . By making of mind something like the religious or philosophic concept of the soul, something opposed to the body instead of a function of the individual as a whole, traditional philosophy and psychology have rendered us a poor service." In the first of these quotations the influence of Lloyd Morgan may be suspected: but I think that the two quotations together illustrate the way psychologists and psychiatrists came to believe, in the first quarter of this century, that philosophers in their concern with ontology have troubled themselves about unreal problems which could be by-passed—though the by-pass often seems strangely like a well-trodden philosophic road: empirical realism, for example. Those who think in this way constantly invoke integration—"all the facts of experience prompt us to see in mentation a biological function,

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1915.

## PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHIATRY

and we are no longer surprised to find this product of integration so different from the nature and functions of all the component parts. All the apparent discontinuities . . . are shown to be a general feature of nature and of facts." Sherrington, who has done more than anyone to develop the concept of integration found the energy-mind difficulty insoluble: whether his refusal to consider mind as energy be sustained or rejected, it is evident that integration was not for him at any rate a sufficient explanation for the emergence of mental activity. I think the biologically more sophisticated and elaborate argument which Leo Loeb recently put forward, indicates the weakness of any attempt to make "integration" the conceptual key to the problem of a psychosomatic unity. Thus Loeb, after stressing the stable, highly differentiated individuality which—through homoeostasis as it were—achieves relative independence of the unstable environment says: "there has thus taken place an evolution of two types of individuality. The first is connected with the differentiation of the organ differentials and with the evolution of the individuality differential and its manifestations, from a very primitive character to the state of great refinement reached in mammals. The second is connected with the evolution of the psychical-social factors, leading to the gradual creation and refinement of the individual in the psychical-social sense. The second evolutionary process is related only indirectly to the development of the individuality differentials; it depends directly upon the increasing complexity and refinement of certain organ differentials, especially of the nervous system. There is therefore no perfect parallelism between these two evolutionary processes. While in the first process a gradual, step-by-step development of the individuality differential occurs, in the second process the most important far-reaching change has taken place suddenly in the transition from anthropoid apes to man."

The growth of our knowledge regarding the nervous system during the last two decades has permitted closer correlation of mental events with bodily functions; such a book as the A.R.N.M.D. symposium on the interrelationship witnesses to the advances now being made it is, however, still true, as John Stuart Mill said a hundred years ago, that to construct the theory of the mind solely on such data as physiology at present affords, seems a great error in principle and an even more serious one in practice, for psychology is in a "more advanced state than that portion of physiology which corresponds to it, and to discard the former for the latter appears to me an infringement of the true canons of inductive philosophy."

• *The Biological Basis of Individuality*, by Leo Loeb, Springfield, 1945, p 654

## PHILOSOPHY

How, then, you will again ask, does the modern psychiatrist look at this ancient problem of mind and body? I think there may be many answers. But most psychiatrists will still say that the question is a spurious one: and their reasons amount to a declaration either that the question is put in a form which fails to satisfy the requirements of logical syntax, or that it is put in a form which includes sentences asserting what is not testable; consequently, they say, traditional statements about the relation of mind and body, which infringe the rules of logical syntax or are without meaning when subjected to the operational procedure, need not be further considered. The standpoint of many psychiatrists is close to that of the American realists, with their monistic conception of neutral-stuff. In practice as I have said the psychiatrist uses a double vocabulary and justifies it on grounds of necessity; he compares his hybrid language to the stereoscope which enables pictures of the same object taken from different angles to be superposed and fused. He knows it is a dangerous practice and he gives alarmed assent to such declarations as this: "The greatest difficulty confronting the abstractor will be descriptions made under the spell of pseudo-problems: syntactically combinations in the same sentence of terms from the language of the psyche with terms of the language of physics. When this is done, at one end of the gradation of consequences, where the terms of the psyche are operationally redefinable, the statement may be translated into usable form. In this instance the least that may be said is that the terms of the psyche are unnecessary. At the other end of the scale is utter confusion, and the statements are lost. Sentences which seem to tell as much about the observer as about the observed and actually nothing definite about either, are of no use."

It is impossible to leave this subject without speaking of consciousness. Psychiatrists commonly regard consciousness not as the essential feature that characterizes mental activity but as a function of the human organism in action. It varies in relation to the state of the organism; it can be conceived in quantitative terms; it is not restricted to the cognitive sort of mental happening—as Spearman put it "a person tends to know his own sensations, feelings and strivings" (any lived experience tends to evoke immediately a knowing of its own characters and experiences). Consciousness individuates relatively late in the evolutionary development of the higher organisms, and is indispensable for the epitomizing, organizing and symbolizing activities which enable human beings to carry out very complex adjustments to their environments and needs. It does not in itself differentiate man from all other living beings as man's capacity to handle propositional symbols, to think about things,

probably does, and it is dependent on physico-chemical happenings, occurrences of the whole organism describable in electrical, metabolic and other concepts, and known to occur in large measure in other living beings too: the extent of the differences between consciousness in man and in animals or plants can be inferred from behaviour. These, I think, are the views of the psychiatrist to-day. If "consciousness" be defined wholly in subjective terms, we cannot, it is true, be certain of it in non-human living beings, but neither can we be certain of it in other men, since we can only infer it: we will infer it from their behaviour, or we will rely on their similarity to ourselves in so many other respects and especially their use of the same words about contents of consciousness as we use. The psychiatrist, of course, is continually meeting disorders of consciousness; these demonstrate to him how dependent it is on the intact functions of the organism and chiefly of the brain, but they also demonstrate how the flame of consciousness can be made to flicker, to flare up or die away without any crude or recognizable physical interference with the organisms, e.g. consciousness may be affected through hypnosis. The psychiatrist therefore is far from desiring to seat consciousness in any group of cells. he will go no further than to hold that in general the integrity of some of the cerebral cortex and its thalamic connections is an indispensable condition for consciousness and, probably, for the exercise of discriminative and educative powers characteristic of conscious intelligence. Much work is at present being done on the anatomical and physiological connections between cell-aggregations in the central nervous system. But it is not on structures, or collocations of cells but rather on their physico-chemical state that the psychiatrist now turns his hopeful eye when he thinks of defining the conditions of consciousness.

You will perhaps wonder how a psychiatrist can talk of consciousness thus far without referring to "the unconscious," which plays so large and active a part in the theory of psychopathology. The unconscious, however, is unhappily named: so positive a concept should not have so negative a verbal symbol, and it is, I think, legitimate to say that privation of consciousness is not the essential characteristic of the events to which the psychoanalyst applies the adjective "unconscious." It seems to me a paradox of psychoanalysis that in its psychology of the unconscious it has tended to perpetuate a form of dualism which would never have arisen were it not for the vast importance men attach to their conscious thoughts—an importance which psychoanalysis set itself vigorously to undermine. Psychoanalysis has not fared well at the hands of philosophers: even so favourable and well informed a critic as Dalbierz says that Freud's empiricism is not consistent, "*le plus souvent, les formules freudiennes rendent un son empiriste très banal. Il y a pourtant ça et là dans les*

## PHILOSOPHY

écrits de Freud des passages qui impliqueraient logiquement une philosophie rationaliste" . . . "l'incohérence de l'attitude de Freud par rapport à la métaphysique et à la théorie de connaissance se prolonge dans tout ce qu'il a écrit sur les diverses valeurs spirituelles."<sup>1</sup> The recurring difficulty in psychoanalysis, for the psychologist as well as the philosopher, is the proliferation in it of concepts by postulation which cannot with any confidence be checked experimentally or empirically by appeal to directly observable fact. There is thus an unbridged gap between concepts with denotative meaning drawn from immediate clinical and laboratory observation and on the other hand the intricate network of concepts with connotative meaning which are designated by the postulates of psychoanalytical theory: the designation, moreover, is unsure because the concepts—for example, "introjected object": "instinct": "unconscious fantasies": "id": do not have their properties specified unambiguously in the postulates of the theory so that rigorously logical deductions can be made from them. You will remember that Freud's standpoint was bluntly empirical, and that he attacked philosophy for clinging "to the illusion that it can produce a complete and coherent picture of the universe, though in fact that picture must needs fall to pieces with every new advance in our knowledge. Its methodological error lies in the fact that it overestimates the epistemological value of our logical operations, and to a certain extent admits the validity of other sources of knowledge, such as intuition." There is clearly much to be said about psychoanalysis, and, for that matter, about systems like C. G. Jung's, which have likewise been developed to meet medical needs and have in due course expanded far beyond the confines of medicine: but I shall not enter upon it, hoping that someone better qualified in philosophy and psychoanalysis will do so in some later Manson lecture. It is a theme Dr. Manson would have approved, for he was a member of that Committee of the British Medical Association whose report gave psychoanalysis its certificate of medical respectability in this country.

I have wandered too discursively and, I fear, ignorantly over some of the ground which is necessarily traversed by the psychiatrist and the philosopher. There is so much else in psychiatry which can be recognized as grist for the philosopher's mill—questions of language and symbolism, of perception, of value, of moral judgment, of causality and purpose—that it is likely future Manson lecturers will often have occasion to revert to aspects of the same subject. Some of them, believing with Scott Buchanan, that "modern empirical science is frustrated science, and its present dogmatic aversion to metaphysics a sign of an internal blindness that threatens the value

<sup>1</sup> *La Méthode Psychoanalytique et la Doctrine Freudienne*, Paris, 1936, Tome 2, p. 454.

## PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHIATRY

of basic routine research and practice," may go on to assert, as he does, that medicine is the medium and perhaps the focus in which the problems of wisdom and science meet. Certainly psychiatry is a field of medicine in which science needs metaphysics, if by metaphysics we mean as William James did, "an unusually stubborn effort to think clearly."



# INTUITION IN CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY:

REV. G. C. STEAD, M.A.

THE object of this paper is to examine the concept of intuition and to determine what part, if any, it should play in Christian philosophy. It is a complex inquiry, and I shall have to save space by a certain economy of purely historical detail, and also, if you will allow me, by by-passing the vexed question of Revelation and Natural Theology. It seems to me that whatever the issue of this debate may prove to be, it will not prevent philosophers from plying their trade; and whether they, or some of them, are to be dignified with the title of Natural Theologians is a problem they can leave to others. The only remaining question is, whether it is lawful for a Christian minister to engage in philosophy. As philosophy is not an openly scandalous pursuit, and there is no canon against it, I take the answer to be "Yes." I would have you regard this paper as an essay in philosophy and allow me to investigate certain aspects of human knowledge, and the light they throw on man's knowledge of God, without presupposing a self-revelation of God to man. Without presupposing, but also without excluding it; revelation cannot be a primary datum for the philosopher, but it may well turn out to be his only ultimately satisfactory conclusion.

Adopting this standpoint, we shall inevitably be traversing that current of thought which reached England about fifty years ago and which, with its eddies and counter-currents, is still a moving force: I mean the insistence on religious experience, and more particularly the analysis of religious experience by the methods of psychology. In practice this method tended to concentrate on the experiences of the individual, and to disregard the far richer store of experience which lay crystallized in historic documents and liturgies—except in so far as these acted as a stimulus to individual piety.

Individualism in some degree is bound to infect all philosophies which regard religious belief as a function of intuition; it is implicit in the idea of intuition itself. For intuition in its original form—the Latin *intuitus*—implies the sense of sight; and though its meaning has of course been extended to cover all sorts of cognitive processes which present some analogy with ocular vision, it retains the idea of directness or immediacy. If we know something because it has been told us, or because we read about it, or even because we reason it out for ourselves by deliberate inference, this is not intuitive knowledge.

Intuitionist philosophies of religion are apt to be individualistic;

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# INTUITION IN CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

to undervalue the formative influence of scripture, tradition and worship, and to forget how little the individual's experience would have been worth if it had grown up without them. Indeed we need hardly examine the claim that our knowledge of God is *wholly* based on intuition in any sense of the word. Yet it may still involve *some* element which is best described as intuition—for example, prophetic intuition or mystical intuition; and we might argue that these are not absolutely dis severable from the normal experience and life of the worshipping community.

The verb *intueri* is found in Cicero. Properly it means "to watch," but it is already capable of being used in a transferred sense; the mind "watches" itself.<sup>1</sup> *Intuitus*, the noun, is post-classical; it occurs rather sparsely in St. Bernard<sup>2</sup> and St. Thomas<sup>3</sup>; but it comes into prominence in the *Regulae*, an early work of Descartes, where it is contrasted with *deductio*, inference. *Intuitus* denotes the power of grasping certain truths "at sight": anyone can "intuit" his own existence, his own thought, and the elementary truths of geometry and arithmetic.<sup>4</sup>

This use of *intuitus* closely corresponds to that of *νοῦς* in Aristotle. From very early times a distinction had been drawn between *νοῦς*, mind or thought in general, and *λόγος*, thought expressed in a particular manner. As Greek philosophy developed it succeeded in giving a reasonably satisfactory account of certain aspects of human thought; the science of logic was in fact the theory of *λόγος*, understood as argument or discursive reasoning. *Νοῦς*, the older and more general term, naturally gathered to itself those aspects of thought which seemed to fall outside the scope of *λόγος* so conceived; where the mind simply grasped an idea without any intermediate steps. But the Greeks never succeeded in clarifying the sense of *νοῦς*; Aristotle's discussion in the *Analytica Posteriora* is almost the only attempt, and it completely failed to enlighten the general public; so *νοῦς* remained as a vague, rather pretentious term whose sense was always liable to be obscured by irrelevant metaphors. "Grasping" an idea was one of them: *καταλαβεῖν* in Greek, *comprehendere* in Latin. But more important for our purposes are the metaphors of seeing, the very fact that "sense" and "thought" had been

<sup>1</sup> *Tusc.* I, 30. *Mentis acies se ipsa intuens.*"

<sup>2</sup> *De Consideratione* II, 2, 3.

<sup>3</sup> ST I, Q 14, a 14. "*scientia visionis*" is a commoner phrase.

<sup>4</sup> *Unusquisque potest animo intueri, se existere, se cogitare, triangulum terminari tribus lineis tantum, globum unica superficie & similia. Intuendum est, 2 & 2 efficere 4.* "*Regulae* III.

<sup>5</sup> *Λογικὸς* is common in Aristotle. *ἡ λογικὴ* (sc. *ἐπιστήμη*) occurs first in Cicero *Fin.* I, 7, 22, cf. *Tusc.* iv, 14, 33.

sharply contrasted in Plato and elsewhere made it natural to regard them as a pair of opposites possessing a kind of symmetry, so that *noûs* came to be regarded as a higher and more interior kind of vision where, so to speak, one "sees with the mind's eye."

I hope to show that these two antitheses are faulty; for (a) there is no sharp distinction between direct and mediate knowledge, and (b) thinking and seeing are bound up together in such a way that it is really confusing to take one as a metaphor for the other. But these two assumptions were made, and have influenced the sense of "intuition" throughout its complicated history.

Let us begin with a provisional list of seven different kinds of experience which have been described as intuitive.

(1) Aristotle attributes to *noûs* the power of grasping self-evident propositions, such as he thought must form the basis of every science. We find intuition used in this connection by Descartes and Locke, and again in the more recent discussion of "intuitive induction" by W. E. Johnson.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ewing's valuable lecture on "Reason and Intuition" deals mainly with intuition in this sense.<sup>2</sup>

(2) Aristotle connects intuition with self-consciousness: "Mind thinks itself," *καὶ ἔστιν ἡ νόησις νοήσεως νόησις*. Locke, following Descartes, says that we have an intuitive knowledge of our own existence. The modern idiom is to say that we know certain things by "inspection" or introspection.

(3) Kant's use of "intuition" is important and distinctive. He defines it very generally as that which gives us immediate knowledge; but his actual doctrine is that immediate knowledge is only given in sense. As is well known, he regards Space and Time as mere "forms of intuition" and so valid only for human cognition: a sort of framework to be filled by sensation. The relation of sense to imagination, and the controversial topic of "pure" intuition, need not detain us here; but "intuition" has been used to denote sensation, or sense *plus* imagination, in many English Kantians, in Ward and Tennant, and with some modifications also in Croce's aesthetics.

(4) Intuition sometimes refers to the way in which we take in a complex perceptual situation at a single glance: so Schopenhauer, in a passage I shall mention later.

(5) Intuition commonly means the power or special aptitude for divining other people's thoughts or intentions. Feminine intuition is proverbial. "Have you men absolutely no intuition?" asks that most feminine of heroines, Zuleika Dobson.

(6) From about 1750 "intuition" has been used as an ethical term, implying that the rightness or wrongness of certain actions is directly apprehended without any calculation of their probable consequences.

<sup>1</sup> *Logic*, Part II, Chapter 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 1941.

## INTUITION IN CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

"Intuitionism" is generally taken to mean this particular ethical doctrine.

(7) Those writers who have claimed that mysticism presents us with a unique and distinctive cognitive power have sometimes used "intuition" in this connection. It generally carries with it the suggestion that mysticism is analogous to our knowledge of self-evident truths (a theory that goes back to Plato) or else that it resembles a separate and special sort of sensation (as in the immemorial language of inner vision)—and sometimes both together. There is no better illustration of the fluidity of the term "intuition" and the way in which it allows one form of experience to be interpreted in the light of another.

I should like to explore each of these contexts of experience. But no self-respecting audience will tolerate a seven-headed thesis, nor will any prudent author propose one. In any case, all roads lead everywhere in philosophy; so perhaps tolerable justice will be done if I divide the body of this paper into two sections. In the first of these I shall examine the notion of immediate awareness in its most obvious context, the perception of sensible objects: in the second I shall apply the results of this inquiry to the problem of communication and revelation.

### II

In the third chapter of *Nature, Man and God*, Archbishop Temple described as possibly the most disastrous moment in the history of Europe "that period of leisure when René Descartes, having no claims to meet, remained for a whole day shut up in a stove." In that fallacious oven was devised a new method of thought which infected the philosophy of the next three hundred years, and which its opponents sometimes call "Methodological Subjectivism"—or, more rudely still, "Methodological Solipsism." In one form or another it suggests that, essentially, the mind only knows its own ideas; either the mind has immediate knowledge only of its own ideas, all else is inferred; or the mind begins by knowing its own ideas, all else is a subsequent development.

I should be the last to defend the Cartesian method in detail; but I must submit that there are two perfectly sound points embedded in it which some neo-realists have failed to grasp. The first is this. Consciousness is an ultimate, in the sense that it cannot be described in terms of anything else, and any statement about conscious experience can only be understood in terms of our own consciousness. I admit that there is another side to the picture. Consciousness is derivative, in the sense that it is an outgrowth of organic life, behaviour is prior to experience, etc. The problem is to find some way of stating these two truths so that they do not appear to conflict. But it confuses

everything if we say, with Temple, "Apprehension takes place within the world, not the world within apprehension." This is an unreal antithesis: a reasonable statement of one truth confronted with the caricature of the other. Of course there is a sense in which it is true that, for each one of us, the world takes *shape* in our minds.

The second point which the Cartesian philosophy has rightly grasped is the notion of "basic certainty." Let us essay to doubt everything: one fact remains indubitable: our own experiences of this and that. We may criticize the details of Descartes' argument. No doubt he tried to read more out of his *cogito* than he put into it; no doubt his attempt to argue from it by strict logical deduction was foredoomed to failure. But he was perfectly right to this extent: there are propositions which we can assert without possibility of mistake, namely those which simply *describe* the observer's own sensations: propositions such as "I am hot" or "that is red." This is, in fact, the only kind of contingent proposition which we can assert without possibility of mistake.

I think the best way of describing these propositions is to say that they are incorrigible. We mean by this that no other proposition can possibly conflict with them. So far as a proposition such as "I am hot" simply describes my state of feeling at a particular moment, we shall never have occasion to correct it; there can be no point in saying "I thought I was hot, but I wasn't." Let us admit, then, that these purely subjective propositions are in actual use and that they enjoy a peculiar status. Further, it seems at least plausible to suggest that these propositions are incorrigible just because they express a state of immediate awareness. But obviously what they express forms only a small part of our experience: much the larger part of it consists in the apprehension of objects, real or apparent. So we now ask: In the apprehension of objects, is there anything corresponding to the immediate awareness we are assuming in the case of pains and other feelings?

To simplify this discussion I propose to concentrate on a single case. Suppose I am taking a country walk, and catch sight of a detached house, perhaps a quarter of a mile away. I am quite positive that it is a house; I can distinguish two windows and a chimney at the right-hand end.

Am I immediately aware of the house, and if so, in what sense?

(1) If we say "yes," we obviously do not mean to deny the activity of light-waves, optic nerves, etc. These simply do not concern us at the moment.

(2) If we say "yes," we obviously *do* mean to assert some sort of presentational immediacy. There is something which is simply *there*. We do not infer it, or learn about it; it is directly present to our consciousness.

(3) But note: although there is this quality of presentational immediacy, as in the case of a headache, there is an important point of difference. For, the very next minute, on going nearer, I see that it is not a house but a haystack. What I took to be windows are merely peculiarly coloured patches of hay, and so on.

Now in the light of this example, are we going to maintain our assertion that in perception we are immediately aware of objects, or shall we revise it? I shall try to examine the various solutions offered by Realism, Idealism, and the sense-datum school.

There is one philosophical scheme which I think does not need serious discussion: that is the form of Realism known as "Naïve Realism." This is essentially the philosophy of the man who has not realized the difficulty. He talks of immediate awareness of objects without realizing that *either* term needs qualification. He wants to say that I can be immediately aware of a haystack just as I can buy a haystack; and *also* that I can be immediately aware of a haystack just as I can be immediately aware of a headache. The only possible conclusion is that things really are just what they seem to be. But to this view the study of illusions, the physiology of sensation and the subjective, bodily-conditioned character of all our sensory qualities offer irremovable objections.

Other realist writers are vague rather than naïve; they offer us general principles such as *adaequatio intellectus ad rem* without explaining how they are to be applied. Now I have no particular quarrel with the general thesis that knowledge predominates over error, or that all awareness is awareness of *something* real, though not necessarily of a real object. But this does not take us very far. And in any case I must observe that causes of faulty or erroneous perception have an instructional value out of all proportion to their frequency or practical importance. Perception depends upon bodily processes, and so far resembles digestion, that we have no consciousness of what goes on until something goes wrong. And even the comparative rarity of error and illusion, though a fact, is a contingent fact, and could be modified by any one of us over a small area, by a few well-considered practical jokes.

Let us then assume that our case of the house and the haystack presents us with a real difficulty in saying that we are immediately aware of objects. To meet this difficulty we must refine our terminology, we shall either have to modify the sense of "immediate awareness," or the sense of "object."

I shall take the latter alternative first. It is possible to meet our difficulty by saying that *both* the house and the haystack are objects. But then we shall have to admit that the house is an object, but not a real object, for when we looked more closely it resolved itself into a haystack. Now what about the haystack? This is at least more real

## PHILOSOPHY

than the house; but we cannot even now be 100 per cent certain that further scrutiny will not disclose a new mistake.

This use of the word "object" occurs in Kant, and in idealist writers.<sup>1</sup> And it allows us to say, *if we like*, that we are immediately aware of objects, in this limited sense. Its disadvantages are, first, that it conflicts with our ordinary use of the word "object" (and still more its adjective, "objective"), to denote what is absolute and independent of any particular person's experience; and second, that we still have to explain how the unreal objects of our experience are related to reality. In practice, the idealist solution is to adopt some such criterion as coherence or intelligibility: the unreal objects of unreflective experience are unreal because they have not been properly articulated and thought out. True reality only belongs to a perfectly co-ordinated and comprehensive system of experience, the Absolute Mind, in which, incidentally, the separate objects are merged in a closely interlocked system.

Now Idealism certainly does justice to one aspect of our experience—the disentangling, ordering, interpretative process that has been going on in all our minds long before we begin to reflect on it. But we cannot explain the nature of the would-be objects of unreflective experience, merely by saying that they are only half-thought-out. We have to explain why our experience is permeated by sensory qualities—red, blue and green, loud and soft, warm and cold; and still more puzzling, the fact that these sensory qualities appear to depend on the structure of human organs of sensation—which are themselves also objects of experience. In other words, the Idealists can refute Scientific Realism, but they cannot account for its success in practice, without themselves adopting a kind of Realism.

We found just now that it was impossible to sustain the thesis that we were immediately aware of objects, taking both expressions in their ordinary sense. We tried modifying the sense of "objects," and got into difficulties. Let us then revert to the ordinary sense of "object," implying objective fact or existence. We cannot now say that we are immediately aware of objects in the same sense as we are immediately aware of pains. We must suppose a merely presentational immediacy, allowing for any amount of subconscious interpretation, and admitting that in any given case our interpretation may be faulty—even though the likelihood of serious error is often very small.

Notice, if you please, one little point about our illusory experience. We might well have remarked "Oh, dear—my eyes deceived me!" But the illusion was not merely optical. It is true that we should not have taken our would-be object for a house, unless its sensory quali-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Tennant, *Philosophical Theology*, especially p. 220 n., where three senses are distinguished.

ties had aided the illusion; it *was* about the right shape and colour. But equally, we should not have mistaken it for a house unless a house was something that we could reasonably expect to see there; we should not have mistaken the haystack for an elephant. This trivial instance may serve to show that our experience involves an interplay of datum and interpretation. More precisely, it depends upon a great variety of physical and mental factors: the structure and state of our sense-organs, our general vitality or fatigue, our degree of attention, our habits and preconceptions, and the ideas in our minds at any particular moment. I could examine these factors in detail, did space permit; but for the present it is enough to insist that any attempt to distinguish precisely between physical and mental factors is artificial; and, more important still, that in genuinely perceptual experience, while there is an element of sheer givenness—of sheer contingent fact—we are never confronted with pure data: only with an amalgam of datum and interpretation. I would, however, maintain that our experience also comprises a region of sheer feeling, where the element of interpretation is negligibly small and where the distinction of subject and object ceases to apply. These are the conclusions I want you to bear in mind when we come to examine the idea of intuition, and vision in particular, as a theological concept.

You will note that it involves a criticism of the sense-datum philosophers, in so far as they attempt to posit pure data as part of the contents of experience: I shall return to this in a moment. I dissent also from Archbishop Temple, and indeed from Dr. Tennant, who seem to make the subject-object relationship into a metaphysical necessity for all experience. Our reflective experience *is* organized in this way, and perhaps necessarily: but it reveals an unreflective experience which is not: incidentally, the doctrine of the Trinity would be far less obscure if we could forgo the necessity of making knowledge into a two-termed relation, in which the object is necessarily opposed to a single subject, a mere me.

Having introduced the terms "*datum*" and "*interpretation*," perhaps I ought to make their meaning a little clearer by a reference to the sense-datum terminology.

When this method of philosophizing was first introduced, it became known as "*the sensum theory*." In practice this expression proved misleading, since it was apt to suggest that sense or sense-data were some kind of new phenomenon—a new discovery of psychology. To avoid this misunderstanding it is better to talk about the sense-datum language, or better still, the sense-datum terminology; for it was intended to be simply a new way of discussing certain familiar features of perceptual experience: the proposal was: Let us adopt the purely non-committal term "*sense-data*" to stand for "that which



we are immediately aware of, whether in perception or in mere feeling."

But although devised with these blameless intentions, the sense-datum terminology has in practice been treated in such a way as to involve some very questionable assumptions.

(a) Lord Russell has pointed out, very rightly, that many idealist theories of knowledge do not allow for the fact that quite unpredictable bits of new knowledge are "fed into" our experience through sensation. If we think of knowledge merely as a self-developing process, we cannot explain why it should develop in such a way as to include the unpredictable, the inconsequent and the catastrophic. Russell goes on: "That there must be a pure datum is, I think, a logically irrefutable consequence of the fact that perception gives rise to new knowledge."<sup>1</sup>

In one sense this is obviously true. In perceptual experience there is always some element that is entirely independent of our preconceptions, habits of thought, state of health, etc., and which makes the difference between perceptual experience and hallucination or imagery.

But it does not follow that what is datum in this sense can ever be datum in sense (b), viz. that which lies wholly on the surface of our consciousness; that which we *seem* to see, hear or feel; that which can be expressed in incorrigible propositions.

But there is also a third use which is made of the word "datum." It is supposed that we can draw a distinction between datum and interpretation (between that which is directly offered in sensation and the beliefs, feelings, etc., which we entertain towards it) in such a way that the datum-element can be wholly defined as the occupation of parts of our sensory field by sensory qualities; in other words, that a complete description of the *datum* could be given by combining a great number of statements like "There is red here now."

So our example of the house and the haystack would be treated thus:

"You experienced a series of visual data, all of them roughly similar in comprising a brownish, squarish shape; but at a certain moment there was a break in the series; in various parts of your visual field, light patches were replaced by dark ones, and uniform areas by striped areas, etc., the total result of which was that a house-shaped pattern was replaced by one in the shape of a haystack."

Now this analysis is not to be rejected merely because it is complicated; but I do not think that it will do. We shall find that if we stick to condition (b) and try to describe exactly and completely *all* that is presented to us, we shall have to bring in qualities that belong to

<sup>1</sup> *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, p. 124.

# PHILOSOPHY

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# CONTENTS OF VOLUME XXIV

PAGE

## ARTICLES

ABRAHAM, G.—The Verb "To Cause"	248
BROAD, C. D.—The Relevance of Psychological Research to Philosophy	291
CRANSTON, M.—Freedom, Discipline and Bondage	133
GALLIE, W. B.—Liberal Morality and Socialist Morality	318
GREGORY, J. C.—The Aesthetic and Science	239
LEWIS, A.—Philosophy and Psychiatry	99
LEWIS, H. D.—Morality and Religion	34
MCPHERSON, T. H.—The Development of Bishop Butler's Ethics (II)	3
MOYAL, J. E.—Causality, Determinism and Probability	310
MURE, G. R. G.—The Organic State	205
RAPHAEL, D. D.—Bishop Butler's View of Conscience	219
ROBINSON, N. H. G.—The Moral Situation	335
SCHULPF, P. A.—A Challenge to Philosophers in the Atomic Age	56
STACE, W. T.—The Parmenidean Dogma	195
STAPLEDON, O.—Personality and Liberty	144
STEAD, G. C.—Intuition in Christian Philosophy	118
STRAWSON, P. F.—Ethical Intuitionism	23

## DISCUSSIONS

RUSSELL, L. J.—Russell's "Human Knowledge—Its Scope and Limits"	253
RYLE, G.—Meaning and Necessity	69

## PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEYS

Philosophy in France—H. B. ACTON	77
Philosophy in Italy—G. DE RUGGIERO	137
Philosophy in Germany—F. H. HEINEMANN	261
The State of Philosophical Studies in India—P. T. RAJU	342

## NEW BOOKS

ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY—Supplementary Volume XXI; Explanation in History and Philosophy (I. M. Hubbard)	164
ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY—Supplementary Volume XXII; Logical Positivism and Ethics (P. H. Nowell-Smith)	366
ARMSTRONG, A. H.—An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy (G. C. Field)	84
Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Filosofia a Roma, Nov. 1946—Vols. I and II (T. E. Jessop)	279
BELOFF, MAX (Editor)—The Federalist (Wilfrid Harrison)	368
BERG, C.—Clinical Psychology (E. A. Bennet)	276
BOAS, G.—Essays on Primitivism and Related Ideas in the Middle Ages (G. C. Stead)	271
BOBBIO, N.—The Philosophy of Decadentism (F. C. Copleston)	180
BOEHNER, P.—The Tractatus de Praedestinatione et de Praescientia Dei et de Futuris Contingentibus (T. Corbishley)	274
BORN, MAX—Natural Philosophy of Cause and Chance (E. A. Milne)	370
BRUNNER, E.—Revelation and Reason (G. E. Hughes)	275
CALLAHAN, J. F.—Four Views of Time in Ancient Philosophy (E. A. Milne)	349
CAMPBELL, C. A.—Moral Intuition and the Principle of Self-Realization (G. R. G. Mare)	160
CASSERLEY, J. V. L.—The Christian in Philosophy (W. R. Inge)	283
COLEMAN, J. (translator)—Art and Faith (Letters between Jean Cocteau and Jacques Maritain) (T. Corbishley)	273

	PAGE
DAY, S. J.— <i>Intuitive Cognition</i> (T. Corbishley)	274
DE BURGH, W. G.— <i>The Life of Reason</i> (W. H. Walsh)	376
EDMAN, I.— <i>Philosopher's Quest</i> (H. D. Lewis)	272
EITREM, S. (and K. KERÉNYI)— <i>Romandichtung und Mythologie und Hermes, der Seelenführer</i> (A. Altmann)	351
EWING, A. C.— <i>The Definition of Good</i> (T. D. Weldon)	82
FERGUSON, A. (editor)— <i>Natural Philosophy through the Eighteenth Century and Allied Topics</i> (G. J. Whitrow)	268
FREEMAN, K.— <i>The Pre-Socratic Philosophers; a Companion to Diels</i> (G. C. Field)	83
FROMM, E.— <i>Man for Himself</i> (J. Hartland-Swann)	359
GILSON, E.— <i>Dante the Philosopher</i> (C. C. J. Webb)	360
GINSBERG, M.— <i>Reason and Unreason in Society</i> (O. de Selincourt)	159
GRENE, M.— <i>Dreadful Freedom, A Critique of Existentialism</i> (T. Corbishley)	370
HARTSHORNE, C.— <i>The Divine Relativity</i> (T. E. Jessop)	358
HEATH, SIR T.— <i>Mathematics in Aristotle</i> (E. A. Milne)	348
HEYWOOD, R.— <i>Telepathy and Allied Phenomena</i> (M. Kneale)	174
<i>Hobhouse Memorial Lectures, 1930-40</i> (O. de Selincourt)	270
INGE, W. R.— <i>Mythicism in Religion</i> (J. W. Harvey)	179
JAMES, W.— <i>Essays in Pragmatism</i> (E. F. Carrutt)	278
JESSOP, T. E.— <i>The Freedom of the Individual in Society</i> (T. D. Weldon)	283
JOACHIM, H. H.— <i>Logical Studies</i> (Stuart Hampshire)	167
JOAD, C. E. M.— <i>Decadence</i> (P. F. Strawson)	266
JOHNSON, M.— <i>Science and the Meanings of Truth</i> (G. J. Whitrow)	169
JOSEPH, H. W. B.— <i>Knowledge and the Good in Plato's Republic</i> (G. C. Field)	84
JOURNET, C.— <i>The Dark Knowledge of God</i> (Walter Stein)	364
JUNG, C. G. (and K. KERÉNYI)— <i>Einführung in das Wesen der Mythologie</i> (A. Altmann)	351
KATSOFF, L. O.— <i>A Philosophy of Mathematics</i> (E. A. Milne)	90
KERÉNYI, K.— <i>Die Antike Religion, Einführung in das Wesen der Mythologie, Romandichtung und Mythologie, Hermes, der Seelenführer und Bachofen und die Zukunft des Humanismus</i> (A. Altmann)	351
KNEALE, W.— <i>Probability and Induction</i> (Sir Edmund Whittaker)	372
LACHMANN, K.— <i>The Renaissance of the Individual</i> (G. E. Hughes)	183
LAMBK, C.— <i>An Analysis of Volitional Life</i> (H. D. Lewis)	86
LEWIS, M. M.— <i>Language and Society</i> (W. J. H. Sprott)	184
MAJOR H. D. A.— <i>Civilization and Religious Values</i> (W. R. Inge)	281
MCCARTHY, J. W.— <i>The Naturalism of Samuel Alexander</i> (E. F. Carrutt)	363
MERCIER, L. J. A.— <i>American Humanism and the New Age</i> (W. B. Gallie)	356
MILLER, H.— <i>An Historical Introduction to Modern Philosophy</i> (D. J. McCracken)	279
MOUNTER, E.— <i>Existentialist Philosophies</i> (H. J. Paton)	355
OCKHAM, W. of— <i>The Tractatus de Successibus</i> (T. Corbishley)	274
PAP, A.— <i>The A Priori in Physical Theory</i> (G. J. Whitrow)	166
PINGEL, M.— <i>An American Utilitarian: Richard Hildreth as a Philosopher</i> (D. G. MacRae)	188
RADHAKRISHNAN, SIR S.— <i>The Bhagavadgītā</i> (L. C. Robertson)	162
RITCHIE, A. D.— <i>Essays in Philosophy and Other Pieces</i> (P. F. Strawson)	362
SARTRE, J.-P.— <i>Existentialism and Humanism</i> (F. C. Copleston)	182
SARTRE, J.-P.— <i>The Emotions</i> (F. C. Copleston)	356
SCHMITT, F. S. (editor)— <i>S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi Opera Omnia</i> (F. C. Copleston)	171
SIDDHESWARANANDA, S.— <i>Quelques Aspects de la Philosophie Védantique</i> (Arnold Kuebst)	173
SMITH, A. H.— <i>Kantian Studies</i> (J. N. Wright)	175
SOAL, S. G.— <i>The Experimental Situation in Psychological Research</i> (M. Kneale)	269
WAHL, J.— <i>The Philosopher's Way</i> (Dorothy Emmet)	365
WAHL, J.— <i>A Short History of Existentialism</i> (F. C. Copleston)	379
WALSH, W. H.— <i>Reason and Experience</i> (J. O. Urmson)	88
WILLIAMS, D.— <i>The Ground of Induction</i> (W. Kneale)	86
WISDOM, J. O.— <i>The Metamorphosis of Philosophy</i> (W. F. H. Barnes)	374
WOLTER, A. B.— <i>The Transcendentals and Their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus</i> (T. Corbishley)	274

# INSTITUTE NOTES

PAGE

LECTURES AT THE INSTITUTE (LENT TERM, 1949)	- - - - -	96
LECTURES AT THE INSTITUTE (1949-50 SESSION)	- - - - -	384

## CORRESPONDENCE

CRANSTON, MAURICE	- - - - -	287
ELWELL-SUTTON, A. S.	- - - - -	95
FREEMAN, KATHLEEN	- - - - -	191

## MISCELLANEOUS

EDDINGTON PRIZE	- - - - -	192
HUTTEN, DR. E. H.— <i>A Note on Semantics</i>	- - - - -	381
INSTITUT INTERNATIONAL DE PHILOSOPHIE (PHILOSOPHY BIBLIOGRAPHY)	- - - - -	I, 191
KIERKEGAARD FELLOWSHIP	- - - - -	287
XTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHILOSOPHY (PROCEEDINGS)	- - - - -	287

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## INTUITION IN CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

patterns and groups, or to the visual field as a whole, and which consequently cannot be described merely by combining statements about point-events. For instance, if we pick out an object from a background, it does not appear to us simply as a more sharply differentiated pattern of colours; our attitude to it, our beliefs about it, will actually merge with the hypothetical original datum, or rather are given along with it.<sup>7</sup> Even such a commonplace phenomenon as visual depth or distance illustrates this well enough—and there is no question of its empirical status in normal cases.

Does this mean that I am rejecting the sense-datum language altogether? Not at all: I regard it as a useful means of dealing with a very limited range of phenomena. It is, in fact, well adapted for discussing the ideal case of perfect scientific observation. As we approach this ideal limit the different senses of "datum" tend to coincide: as Russell says, "we approach asymptotically to pure datum." But for dealing with our normal everyday experience the sense-datum language is patently inadequate; and it does not in the least follow that any aspect of experience is unimportant or uninformative merely because it cannot be described in the sense-datum terminology.

### III

Our knowledge of other selves is clearly vital to the philosophy of religion. If we speak of God as personal, then it is knowledge of persons which will yield the closest analogy to knowledge of God. For it is here that we first encounter the fact of communication: here we are not dealing with a mere object or process, but with a being possessing its own initiative and self-expression.

So the I-thou approach is rightly aimed. On the other hand, it often evades the philosophical problem: "What exactly is communication, and how far does it depend on material means?" Of course this is only an aspect of the much larger problem, "What is mind and how far does it depend on matter?" I will try to lead up to this problem of communication by exhibiting a few more facts about the perception and interpretation of physical processes.

Schopenhauer remarked that a mechanic could take in the function of a complex machine *anschaulich*, by intuition or at a glance. Perhaps he has seen a similar machine before; in this case it might be enough to say that he recognizes a familiar form, and that this recognition arouses memories of its behaviour in the past, and so forms an expectation of how *this* machine will behave; just so the primitive hunter, on recognizing a tiger, almost instinctively prepares himself for its expected behaviour. But suppose the mechanic has never

<sup>7</sup> Cf. F. Waismann on "Verifiability" in *Analysis and Metaphysics* (Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume XIX).

seen a machine precisely similar to this one. In this case there is a power of analysis and recombination at work: he recognizes the functions of the various levers and pulleys, and thereby sees how the whole thing works. But now suppose one further case: suppose the mechanic doesn't take in the function of the machine at first glance, but later he remembers it and suddenly sees how it works. Here we have his power of interpretation at work, not on immediate sense-given data, but on images. We may perhaps want to say that his brain has been working subconsciously in the interval: but provided he reaches his understanding without any *conscious* process of working, I think we should still say he realizes it intuitively. In this case we are not far removed from the "flash of intuition" in which the scientist hits upon a solution to a problem. It is, in fact, a much more developed function of the same sort of process of interpretation which we saw to be at work in the simplest perception of physical objects.

Another instructive case is that in which we do not simply apprehend a complex situation, but participate in a complex process. The sort of case I have in mind is that of an experienced sailor managing a small boat in rough water; we may say that, from the look of the waves at any moment he "knows exactly what the boat is going to do"—and that without any conscious effort of attention or thought. At every moment the situation changes, at every moment he makes the appropriate movement, which itself reacts on the process around him. I think we could say that he does this "by intuition"; but our use of the term here is quite imprecise—we might just as well say, "by instinct." We merely wish to exclude any idea of conscious calculation of the energy of moving masses; we don't mean to imply any sort of faculty which works independently of sensory data.

When we come to deal with communication between persons we shall find two main problems: the first is descriptive, the other factual.

No one doubts that we arrive at our knowledge of other people's minds *largely* by interpretation of the sensory data which arise in the course of our actual dealings with them. Is this too complicated? Why not say simply "By observing their bodily behaviour"? This latter phrase fails on two counts: "*behaviour*" fails to represent those looks, words, gestures, etc., which are more or less *intentionally* communicative; and "*observing*" suggests the merely passive role of the field naturalist. Sometimes, of course, we do observe passively; but in the main we come to understand one another by interpreting to ourselves a complexity of mutual response and interaction which has been going on long before we become reflectively conscious of it. And we depend upon our senses; that is why it is a handicap to be blind or deaf.

Now for the descriptive problem. Suppose our knowledge of other people's minds be, not largely but *wholly* derived in this way, would

it be right to call it *inferential*? The intention of this phrase is clear enough; it is intended to stress the indirect character of interpersonal knowledge; to suggest that however immediate, however direct, such knowledge appears to be, it is in fact based upon a complicated process of interpretation, for which sense-experience, past and present, supplies the data (as in the case of the sailor). There is no need to invoke any mysterious separate faculty for intuition.

Now if this view were factually correct, I should still dislike the term "inferential knowledge" on purely descriptive grounds. Even if it correctly describes the logical structure of personal knowledge at its full development, it is bound to suggest a misleading picture of its genesis in childhood: it suggests that we *begin* by knowing certain facts and *then* infer other facts from them. Actually the development in childhood is far more organic. From the first the child is part of a system of behaviour in which it gradually learns to take a conscious and intelligent part. Its first reactions are emotional; but gradually it learns to distinguish between inanimate things and animate selves, and becomes conscious of its own self in the process.

Thus if it be true that inter-personal knowledge depends entirely on sense-perception and interpretation, I should still not want to call such knowledge inferential. It is worth noting that the inferential or causal theory of ordinary perception has been rejected by most philosophers; and I think very similar objections would apply to an inferential theory of communication, and to an inferential theology. So neither "intuition" nor "inference" are foolproof descriptions; and I am not very keen on Fr. d'Arcy's "illative sense," which is really an attempt to avoid the misleading suggestions of "inferential knowledge" while preserving the substance of the Thomist position that our knowledge of God is ultimately derived from sense-perception. If this reading of the facts is right, I think "subconscious interpretation" is a much better phrase.

But we still have to deal with a factual problem in communication. Do we in fact communicate only by outward signs?

It has long been recognized that telepathy, if it exists, would form an exception. Telepathy is generally regarded as a rare phenomenon, appearing intermittently and affecting only a small number of sensitive persons; it does not fall within any ordinary definition of intuition. Nevertheless I think it worth consideration; for if we recognize it at all, it is difficult to exclude the possibility that it also operates in an attenuated form as an auxiliary to normal conversation through outward signs. (Nature rather likes auxiliary gear, and has little respect for Occam's razor!) Again, the accounts of its supposed methods of working present some analogies which are instructive and fruitful even if we reserve judgment about the evidence itself.

We must avoid the temptation to think of telepathy as a "sixth



## PHILOSOPHY

sense": it does not seem to employ special bodily sense-organs, or to be effected or impaired by spatial separation, as our senses are. But further: our senses differ one from another in presenting quite distinctive sense-qualities; red and green here, warm and cold there. In telepathy the phenomena presented are imagery, dreams, hallucinations, motor impulses leading to automatic writing, etc. To some extent these may be intrinsically distinct from normal experience; telepathic hallucinations may occur in persons not normally subject to hallucinations of any kind; telepathic dreams may be marked by peculiar vividness, and so on. But broadly speaking these phenomena do not presuppose any absolute addition to our mental furniture. Could a colour-blind sensitive distinguish colours under telepathic influence? I do not know; but such evidence as I have examined points the other way: not only the basic sensory qualities but even the ideas and trains of imagery are mainly those native to the recipient's mind; but they present themselves in unfamiliar and significant recombinations. They may possess the peculiar vividness and intrusive character of hallucinations; but at the other pole they shade off into merely curious occurrences of normal imagery and normal dreams. Indeed, as Professor Price has pointed out, telepathy is often more like catching an infection than using a sense; I may catch an idea from your mind without being aware that I am doing so.

For the purposes of this paper I shall not prejudge the question of telepathy, which would require elaborate discussion. My actual *opinion* is that the evidence for it is now fairly strong; and I think it is important as suggesting a new kind of evidence for minds being partially independent of matter—evidence which may convince some who would not respond to purely philosophical argument. One might think of minds as normally focussed in the space-time continuum of the physical organism, yet capable of disengaging, and of communication as a mutual influence which is yet normally focussed in the train of physical signs at particular moments. But my present concern with telepathy is more limited; it is that it gives us a new picture of a possible mode of presentation, which might be described in general terms as "directed imagination," if this rather Irish-sounding term be allowed; where the sense-qualities and many of their patterns and associations are those of the recipient's own mind, but superimposed on this is a pattern which possesses significance of its own.

Let us now put together, with telepathy as a possible addition—

- (1) The purely artistic or poetic inspiration, such as that so ably studied by Professor Lowes in the case of Coleridge;
- (2) The "flash of intuition" which to the theoretical scientist marks the emergence of a solution to a long-digested problem;

(3) The very similar intuition which precedes a metaphysical theory. (Metaphysical theories, I think, are ultimately related to empirical facts; but there is a very large element of selection, interpretation and value-judgment such as we meet also in historical generalizations.)

(4) Prophetic inspiration, so far as we can determine its nature; and

(5) (Unless I am wrong) those striking and often rather moving cases which occasionally occur to most of us (sometimes, but not always, under a certain emotional stress) where a concrete situation suddenly presents itself in an entirely new light: we may suddenly understand what was perplexing, or reconcile ourselves to what was intolerable, or seem to grasp some new truth, which on later reflection still seems valid, or simply do something on impulse, which later seems to have an inspirational quality of perfect appropriateness.<sup>1</sup>

I do not think these cases can be marked off by any crude psychological criterion—by their simply presenting a different kind of phenomena. I am not in the least competent to discuss the ecstatic theory of prophecy; but analogy would suggest that if there were an ecstatic or visionary element, this would not be invariable, and was not the prophet's real criterion for his "Thus saith the Lord" by which he marked off his oracle as inspirational. The poet sometimes dreams his poem, as Coleridge did; the prophet sometimes simply imagines his oracle—but there is something in it which tells him that it is not his own, but that another is imagining it in him.

Can we in the least suggest what this something may be, or shall we have to take refuge in saying that it is incommunicable and undefinable? I should be very surprised if some element of feeling (and possibly unique feeling) did not enter into it; but it might so far play only the same sort of part as the scientist's feeling that he is on the verge of a discovery; here nothing can be learnt from the feeling itself; it must be followed up and explicated. And obviously the prophet's previous ideas and training control him to a large extent, nothing could be accepted as a revelation that was utterly discordant with all his previous ideas of God. But we might explain all this as a special form of creative imagination. In the case of the poet, the certainty and significance of the word-pattern that emerges seems to be due to his having struck out an aesthetically satisfactory embodiment of the imagery that has been jostling in his subconscious mind; and so with the scientist, *mutatis mutandis*. How do our supposed cases of prophetic revelation differ from these? I shall try to suggest an answer in my conclusion. But let us note—

<sup>1</sup> Some of these cases could be represented as mere alterations in our feelings towards a certain situation, but these are bound up with genuine recognitions of new truths, i.e. very general empirical propositions.

## PHILOSOPHY

(a) That we are dealing with what *purport* to be messages, which the poet's creative fancy does not; and

(b) That we are not trying to find an *infallible* criterion: there is no evidence for this; hence, of course, the need for extrinsic tests—for "trying the spirits" and judging by results.

It is time I drew this discussion to a close. I shall state four points in conclusion.

(1) We began by asking "Is intuition a useful term to appropriate for Christian philosophy?" I think this discussion will have shown that it has many drawbacks; its variations in meaning are very complex, and it is apt to suggest ungrounded associations between them. Nevertheless if followed out to the end it does introduce us to an important locus of revelation.\*

(2) Am I arguing for revelation through the subconscious?—a theory which Dr. Geddes Macgregor has criticized in the *Journal of Theological Studies*. Yes, if you like; but I posit revelation through the whole mind, subconscious and conscious; and I would argue that there is a subconscious factor in all thinking, even if one is merely reciting the ABC; and therefore also in discursive thought as well as intuitive. In intention, at least, I am no irrationalist.

(3) Revelation in the theological sense is most easily understood as an intrusion—if you like, the permeation of the natural world by a higher pattern of personal order. This may not be the final truth about the matter; what is true is that the pattern of divine activity is more easily grasped in what seems to be causally and temporally irruptive than in the silent pressure of sanctifying grace. Hence any sort of inspiration suggests divine activity, provided that its laws are not understood. Scientific explanation, by destroying its mystery, destroys its usefulness as a symbol.

(4) This pattern of divine action is not self-evident to fallen man; its apprehension is, so to speak, a matter of interpretation, of perspective, or recognizing a half-forgotten face. From the nature of the case we can never prove the guidance or overruling of events on earth by the will of a transcendent God: the facts will always admit of some other perspective or interpretation. Nevertheless such overruling will be most concrete and most characteristic where the mere physical factors are too complex to be simply explained by the operation of one or two simple scientific laws, and where they are associated with a consciousness that wills to obey. It is impossible to point to any sphere of experience which cannot be atheously interpreted. But this is not a matter for regret; it is only a philosophical version of the fact that God does not compel belief; the divine Revelation can only be grasped by Faith.

\* On the other hand, it admittedly fails to emphasize the importance of the will and of practical obedience in promoting knowledge; yet see § 5 above.

# FREEDOM, DISCIPLINE AND BONDAGE

MAURICE CRANSTON, B.A.

I BELIEVE we could learn more about freedom if we talked less about freedom. Because "freedom" is a word with singular prestige, various moral philosophers have embodied it in their teaching and claimed to set forth its true characteristics. Many words employed in philosophical controversy are ambiguous. "Freedom," I think, is one of the most troublesome. I propose to attempt some disentangling.<sup>1</sup>

To begin with, there is a sense in which the meaning of "freedom" seems to present no difficulties. This sense occurs in such a remark as: "That animal was in captivity and now it is free." I shall call this "simple freedom" and what it means is the absence of constraint. Thus applied there would probably be general agreement about the word. The difficulties arise when we come to consider freedom as pertaining to human persons. Here the distinction between *simple* freedom and the more philosophical definitions of the word will emerge.

On the *simple* definition a man is free if constraint is absent, and that is all there is to it. But this will not do for most philosophers.

It is pointed out that man is a special case in that he experiences conflicting desires. He wills a thing and he does not will it; or he wills something and at the same time he wills something else which is incompatible with it. Man, we are reminded, is a rational creature, but besides his rational will he is subject to the solicitations of impulses and desires which are not rational. Therefore, it is argued, the mere absence of constraint is not a sufficient condition of human freedom and hence not a sufficient definition of the word "freedom" as applied to human persons.

Some of the greatest moral philosophers—Spinoza, Kant and Butler spring first to mind—insist that in speaking of freedom with regard to human persons we are dealing with something that stands in marked contrast to what they call "licence," or the indulgence of non-rational desires and passions. Licence does not mean the same thing as the *simple* freedom which I have just defined. *Simple* freedom, meaning the absence of constraint, specifies nothing about the *origin*, rational or non-rational, of desires. When moralists talk of "licence" I take them to mean specifically the indulgence of *non-rational* desires.

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Dr W. D. Falk, my original Oxford tutor, for several suggestions embodied in this paper.

Since my *simple* definition of freedom does not discriminate between the origins of desires it clearly does not mean what the Rational moralists mean by freedom. Applying the word "licence" to the indulgence of the non-rational, they reserve the word "freedom" for the unfettered expression of the rational will. This is clearly a new definition. Whether it is more correct or more useful, I am not concerned at the moment to argue. I note simply that it is different. I shall distinguish it from *simple* freedom by calling it "*rational* freedom."

The rational theorists' notion of freedom follows from their conception of the human person. They do not observe in a man a mere nexus of conflicting desires, but a hierarchy of desires. Some desires are more important, more lasting, more essential to the nature of man than others. These are the desires springing from the human reason. Reason, so the familiar argument runs, is man's peculiar and essential characteristic. Thus, in willing those ends which his reason apprehends as most appropriate, he is exhibiting his peculiar and essential nature. In so far as his conduct is governed by the non-rational desires he shares with the beasts, he is not exhibiting his peculiar and essential nature. Kant declared that rational desire (the good will) was most evident when it appeared in conflict with non-rational desire.

Thus, whereas *simple* freedom was defined negatively as the absence of constraint, *rational* freedom may be defined negatively as the absence of non-rational usurpation of the human will. But *rational* freedom is usually defined in positive terms. Kant says that one must seek for the essence of freedom in the positive. *Simple* freedom does not entail *getting* one's own way, but only the absence of hindrance to the pursuit of it. *Rational* freedom is something to be realized: it carries with it the idea of control; the emphasis is on the successful frustration of the non-rational by the rational faculty. *Rational* freedom is realized in self discipline, in the maintenance of reason's proper authority over the non-rational elements. On this analysis we are free when we act under the government of reason.

On the *simple* definition of freedom, we can speak of our freedom being imperilled from within, in the sense that we can speak of ourselves being constrained from within by habit, for example, or by inhibitions. But we shall also and rather more often look outwards—to the constraint of external authority and circumstance.

Theorists of *rational* freedom, on the other hand, draw our attention to the enemy within: to the non-rational faculties that constantly threaten the supremacy of reason. They give less thought to the situation of the individual in relation to external forces.

This fact, coupled with the "discovery of the essence" of *rational*

## FREEDOM, DISCIPLINE AND BONDAGE

freedom in realization and discipline, prepared the way historically for a startling development—for the notion of external forces being employed to promote freedom, for the notion that men may be forced to be free.

We have come a long way from *simple* freedom now. *Simple* freedom means the absence of constraint; this new definition insists, on the contrary, that constraint should be present, first, to assist the rational faculty in the individual person to secure mastery over the non-rational faculties, secondly, to clarify rational ends for the benefit of people with limited intelligence.

Here we have the *rational* freedom of Butler and Kant developed by Rousseau, Hegel and Bosanquet (Spinoza having already prepared the way for them). To distinguish it from the earlier definition I shall call it *compulsory rational freedom*.

*Compulsory rational freedom* sounds paradoxical and nonsensical on the face of it, but paradoxical and nonsensical only if "freedom" is taken to mean *simple* freedom as I have distinguished it. If the *simple* definition is rejected as spurious, as it is by the theories of *rational* freedom, this new definition is not so paradoxical and nonsensical. If we allow the theorists of *rational* freedom to define the word for us, then the notion of compulsory freedom may be developed quite plausibly. Preposterous as it may sound to some ears (as it does to mine) *compulsory rational freedom* is argued by no means illogically from the premises of *rational* freedom. (Presently, however, I shall point to a flaw in this development.)

*Rational* freedom, it has been explained, is realized in rational control. Now, the study of history and of human behaviour indicates to those best versed in such matters just those external conditions most favourable to and those most detrimental to the exercise of rational control within the individual person. In so far as these conditions can be established or even enforced by men of wisdom and authority in a community, such enforcement will promote the freedom of each individual.

Consider an example. A young man's rational control is most easily usurped by his non-rational faculties when he is in the presence of pretty young women. If external forces contrive to keep him away from the society of pretty women, then those forces are assisting him to act rationally, and thus to experience (*rational*) freedom. By denying him the opportunity to act irrationally, external forces are compelling him to act rationally. The young man is thus enjoying *compulsory rational freedom*.

I have tried, however briefly, to suggest that there is a case to be argued in support of three suggestions as to the meaning of "freedom." But it is very confusing to have the word "freedom" so variously defined. *Simple* freedom and *compulsory rational* freedom

## PHILOSOPHY

are a flat contradiction, and while *compulsory rational* freedom is postulated as a logical development of *rational* freedom, most votaries of *rational* freedom would reject it.

But this is only part of our problem. Not only are we embarrassed by the richness and variety of definitions of freedom volunteered by moral theorists, we actually find ourselves *feeling free* in a puzzling variety of circumstances.

I wish to draw attention to four examples:

(a) One can feel free when one has the opportunity to escape constraint, inhibition and authority and pursue one's rational or non-rational inclinations, whims, desires, caprice, with nobody to say yea or nay.

(b) One can feel free when one actually succeeds in mastering non-rational desires and in *breaking* such habits as smoking and staying late in bed.

(c) One can feel free as the result of an exchange of bondage. One can feel free on leaving one's civilian responsibilities to join an army, and feel free on leaving the regimentation of an army to enter civilian life.

(d) One can even feel free in bondage. This is particularly interesting because it is paradoxical in the way that the notion of *compulsory rational* freedom is paradoxical. For many people nothing is so painful as the burden of responsibility, of making a decision or a choice. To be in bondage, where one has no choice and where decisions are taken for one, is to be relieved of anxieties and the agony of indecision; thus to feel free.

It is open to someone to suggest that "being free" means nothing other than this "feeling free," in which case "freedom" will be the name of a psychological, or more strictly a psycho-somatic condition capable of stimulus by an almost incalculable variety of circumstance. "Freedom" would then be like "cheerfulness" and there would be no more scope for argument about it, since we should all be as free as we felt. No one would be able to lay down rules about freedom for anyone else. The masochist would be free when bound and gagged just as the vagabond poet would be free when roaming the countryside; it would all be a matter of temperament.

Very few of us would agree to this. It would be anomalous to say that men are free when they *feel* free while dogs are free when they *are* free. But while we refuse to equate "feeling free" with "being free," there must surely be some connection. I think that case (d) above lends some weight to the *compulsory rational* definition of freedom, for it does not sound so outrageous to talk of being forced to be free if we can actually *feel* free in bondage. On the other hand, case (a) would oblige the theorists of both *rational* freedom and *compulsory rational* freedom to say that the fact of feeling free (as

## FREEDOM, DISCIPLINE AND BONDAGE

we sometimes do in following our non-rational desires) is no evidence of being free.

And what of the connection between feeling free and being free in the *simple* sense? Cases (c) and (d) indicate that we can feel free when we are *not* free on the *simple* definition, or so it seems at first sight. But let us look again. The conditions of *simple* freedom exist plainly in case (a) where the absence of external constraint is coupled with the absence of internal inhibition and case (b) where the absence of external constraint is coupled with the absence of internal habit domination. In case (c) there is an exchange of bondage, which means that there has been the removal of one particularly irksome form of bondage, and the fact that it is succeeded by a different form of bondage does not alter the fact that the old one has gone. A new bondage is usually more agreeable for a time than an old one. The person feeling free in the exchange of bondage is *in fact* free to this extent. Case (d), in which a person feels free in bondage *because* it is bondage is more difficult to explain. For one thing it is likely to happen in only a limited number of instances, and because it happens with some people, it does not follow that it is likely to happen with most. Yet on the *simple* definition of freedom we can concede that a person in bondage is *in fact* free from the burden of choice and decision (if it be a burden), so there is a sense of being free which corresponds to his feeling free.

The point of these psychological considerations is this: if there is any *fact* of freedom corresponding to our *feelings* of freedom it can only be the sort of freedom defined as the absence of constraint. On any other definition of freedom our feeling "free" must often be wholly illusory and mischievous and it is difficult to determine, on such other theories, how these feelings come to be connected in the mind with the notion of freedom.

But this is not the only shortcoming of the "philosophical" definitions. The doctrine of *rational* freedom bifurcates the human personality. It presents us with a picture of man as a house divided: there is the rational self, properly superior, and there is the non-rational self, an omnipresent pretender ready and waiting to usurp authority.

I am suspicious of this bifurcation. Let us consider an example in which it may be applied. Circumstances are such that a man must choose between eating his dinner and writing an important letter in 'me for the post. On the *rational* theory, it would doubtless be argued, this man's rational self wants to write the letter and his non-rational self wants to dine. As a metaphorical way of speaking, this may not be particularly objectionable. It proceeds from attributing the hunger to one entity and the reflective process to another entity, and since common sense might agree to attribute the one to



the body and the other to the mind, it could be pleaded that the philosopher is only using more pretentious language to express very much the same notion. But the philosopher's pretentious language leads him to say more than this. Whereas for commonsense "mind plus body = a man," on the rational theorists' analysis we have "rational self plus non-rational self = two selves." Now since it is elementary arithmetic that a personality (i.e. one self) cannot = two selves, one of these two selves has to be shown to be unreal. It is argued that a man's very awareness of his own being and identity resides in the rational self; this, together with further reasons of a like nature, leads to the assertion that the rational self is the true self. The non-rational self (the very existence of which is postulated by the bifurcation theory) is now shown to be unreal. Unreal, that is, as a *self*. It is real enough in the sense that the Pilgrim's burden is real in Bunyan's novel—always attached to the Pilgrim but never of him.

In the interests of brevity I have perhaps stated this theory a little crudely, and I shall hope to handle it more delicately when I come to review it in the light of further considerations. But I shall not convince myself that this bifurcation of the human personality is a correct analysis. It is true, of course, that we all experience inner conflicts. Conflicts, which, being difficult to pin down, tend to be expressed in poetic language. Yet it seems to me that a good number of these inner conflicts can be identified as occurring between short-term and long-term objects of interest and conation. In the dine-or-write-the-letter dilemma there is not *one* self wanting to dine and *another* wanting to write the letter, surely, but a situation more accurately expressed thus: My whole self wants to dine. My whole self also wants the particular object towards which writing the letter is a necessary means. If, in the end, I write the letter (without wanting to do so *in itself*, because it precludes my dining, which I want to do), it is because *I* (that is my whole personality) want this long-term satisfaction more than I (still my whole personality) want my dinner. The fact that reason is involved in the apprehension of long-term interest and the direction of conation towards long-term goals<sup>1</sup> does not, in my opinion, justify us in calling such objects *rational* objects while we call short-term objects (which do not involve so much reflection) *non-rational*. Even less, I should say, are we entitled to treat them as manifestations of separate entities.

But supposing we admit the bifurcation. If we accept the *rational* definition of freedom, we can speak of freedom only when the rational element is unconstrained by the non-rational; when the non-rational is unconstrained by the rational, we are not allowed to apply the term.

<sup>1</sup> I visualize this as including duties.

## FREEDOM, DISCIPLINE AND BONDAGE

The situation is reminiscent of the king in the fairy tale who said that a victory was what happened when his troops defeated an enemy—when an enemy defeated his troops there had been no victory, only a readjustment of military dispositions.

It is precisely this claim to proprietary rights in the use of language which leads to the notion that men may be forced to be free. I have mentioned the fact that certain people feel free when they are in bondage, when they are, in other words, being forced. But this is not what Rousseau and Hegel have in mind. What they are saying follows from their view of the bifurcation of the human personality, their view that the individual is so divided that an outside agent (e.g. the State) can enter the struggle within the individual on the side of the rational element to assist in thwarting the non-rational, and even take over rational control when the individual's own rational faculty weakens or fails. Thus elaborated, the proposition that men may be forced to be free may seem less startling, less (to use a word of Berkeley's) repugnant. But less repugnant only because it differs from what commonsense would have thought was meant by the words "forced" and "free" in the original proposition. The very fact that an ordinary man calls the proposition "a paradox" indicates that, however difficult it might be for him to explain the total implications of freedom, to be free means to him broadly what I have indicated in my *simple* definition of freedom, namely the absence of force (or constraint). I am not saying that this is anything other than an unreflective use of the word, but it is, I wish to maintain, a significant use.

Is the *rational* definition more significant? I have referred to the rational theorists' search for the "positive essence" of freedom, and their discovery of this in self-discipline—in rational control. It may be asked why, if *discipline* is the key to fulfilment, the rational theorists continue to talk of freedom? The answer is partly that freedom is an exalted word. It sounds good. For although the nineteenth century frowned on "free thought" and "free love" and twentieth century has ceased to favour "free enterprise," freedom is generally regarded (even if not generally understood) as desirable. And the feeling of freedom is certainly agreeable.

Precisely what does the discovery of the essence of freedom in discipline amount to? If we retained the *simple* definition of freedom, the point could be expressed this way: "Freedom is a snare and delusion; discipline, that is rational control, is the secret of human fulfilment." Thus expressed the theory does not sound especially attractive. Its votaries prefer to express it this way: "What the ignorant call 'freedom' is a snare and a delusion; true freedom, that is rational control, is the secret of human fulfilment."

The very fact that rational theorists have so often to resort to

such epithets as *true* and *real* in speaking of freedom is to my mind a sign of weakness. The reasons that led me to distinguish between *simple* freedom and *rational* freedom led the rational theorists to distinguish between *true* freedom and freedom *tout court*, but where my distinction serves simply to distinguish, theirs serves also to brand freedom *tout court* as spurious.

Yet I believe the case of the rational theorists could be expressed without prejudicial discrimination of this kind, even without any special definition of freedom. If we take the proposition "I am free" and analyse its meaning according to the *simple* and *rational* theories, we shall soon find, I suggest, that the subject of the dispute is not the meaning of the word "*free*" but the nature of the subject, "*I*." In other words, the difference between the two definitions boils down to a difference of opinion as to the Self. The *simple* theory takes the Self as the whole body-mind complex; the *rational* theory distinguishes a more rarified Self. Thus the *rational* theory distinguishes a "true" freedom from more naïve notions of freedom only because it distinguishes a "true" Self from more naïve notions of the Self. Because the (rational) Self is not the same as the passions, whims and irrational desires which prevail upon it from the flesh to which it is attached, freedom for the Self is not freedom for the physical nexus.

Make the case for this particular theory of the Self and it is not necessary to make the case for the *rational* definition of freedom. If "I am free" means "my essential Self is free" and "my essential Self" is the rational reflective part of my being, there is no need to use anything other than the *simple* definition of freedom in presenting the argument. For if to be free means to be unconstrained (as the *simple* definition expresses it), I am free when *I*—that is my rational, reflective Self—am unconstrained. Which is precisely what the theorists of *rational* freedom are saying.

Such a restatement of its position in terms of the *simple* definition is not possible in the case of *compulsory rational* freedom. I have underlined a point which the rational theorists themselves do not often make plain, namely, that on their own theory, the discipline which is essential to the experience of freedom is *self-discipline*. Rousseau and Hegel substitute discipline for self-discipline, and in so doing take away the main plank on which *rational* freedom rests. Their definition of freedom is thus particularly troublesome, because its nature has either to be exhibited by a philosophical sleight of hand (inference from the words employed by Kant and company, without regard to their meaning) or by a dogmatic insistence that freedom is what they say it is, however widely the word may have been employed to describe other and incompatible situations.

Hence, although I have hitherto treated *compulsory rational* free-

## FREEDOM, DISCIPLINE AND BONDAGE

dom as a logical development of the *rational* definition, I think it must now be separated and treated as a definition of its own kind. There is nothing to stop Rousseau and Hegel defining freedom as obedience to the rational law however that obedience is secured; nothing to stop them speaking of *compulsory rational freedom* where everybody else would speak of *compulsory rational discipline*. But it is a usage that has caused a great deal of bewilderment.

Philosophy contains two distinct "problems of freedom." One comes into political philosophy, the other into mental philosophy; both come into moral philosophy. The first concerns the freedom of the individual *vis-à-vis* his external situation (i.e. political authority, economic circumstances, etc.). The second concerns the freedom of the human personality *vis-à-vis* the principle of psychological and physiological causation (the so-called Free-will Problem).

I have distinguished these problems only to distinguish yet another definition of freedom; I shall call this *absolute* freedom and the considerations which give rise to it are these:—On the *simple* definition, freedom stands opposed to constraint. But freedom and constraint are not materially exclusive *logical contraries*. The most powerful constraint does not necessarily rule out some measure of freedom. Neither is the freedom which is characterized by the absence of constraint unlimited.

A man says he is constrained if his government orders him, for example, to join its army on pain of death. Yet the choice remains open to him. He is free to disobey and accept the consequences. He is, strictly speaking, a volunteer if he prefers enlisting to dying. Admittedly the alternative is an intolerable one, but it is there and must be recognized. Constraint is the complete contrary of freedom only when overwhelming force is used to achieve the few ends that overwhelming force can achieve, e.g. leading a horse to water, throwing a man into prison. Except in such extreme and uncommon instances, constraint bears to freedom not the relation of contrariety, but of polar antagonism. This permits of degrees of constraint and degrees of freedom. And the principle is: the more constraint, the less freedom; the less constraint, the more freedom.

In contra-distinction to this, freedom is defined by some philosophers as that which *stands opposed to necessity*: as indeterminism as opposed to determinism. This is what I call *absolute* freedom. And this definition has at least the advantage of being clear-cut. (Absolute) Freedom is the formal contrary of determination. A thing cannot be both free and determined. If a thing is free then by (this) definition it is not determined, and if it is determined it is not free.

"*Absolute* freedom" is commonly employed in discussions of the second of the two "problems of freedom" I have distinguished, that is in regard to the freedom of the human person *vis-à-vis* internal

## PHILOSOPHY

causation. It is less often employed in the discussion of political freedom, in which the question often takes the form: "*How much freedom for the individual is compatible with social order and welfare?*" Where degrees of freedom are admitted, the *absolute* definition is clearly not applicable. But it is sometimes held to be applicable to the other problem, which usually takes the form: "*Is the human will free or not free?*"

It seems to me, however, that the employment of the word "freedom" to mean only what the *absolute* definition has it to mean in regard to this second question can only produce one answer: "No, the human will is *not* free." The argument for psychological and physiological determination of human behaviour is a powerful one. Even the person who believes he is free can detect a causal pattern over a certain area of his conduct, and a psychoanalyst could probably discern one over an even wider area. Many of us would like to speak of our actions as being somehow both free and determined, but if the word "*free*" means, by definition, the undetermined, then we cannot speak significantly in this way. The *absolute* definition of freedom, in effect, gives the case of freedom versus determinism to the determinist.

This result is doubtless wholly pleasing to the determinist, to whom therefore the *absolute* definition of freedom will commend itself. For its lucidity, for its precision, its logical and formal characteristics, the *absolute* definition is preferable to the *simple* one. But there is still something to be said for the *simple* definition and a case to be made for the freedom thus defined.

It is surprising how often freedom, in the full glory of its absolute sense, is turned out of the front door only to be admitted in humbler guise at the back. Many psychological determinists are political libertarians. There is no such thing as freedom in the self, they argue, but they still speak of an individual being more, or less, free with regard to his external situation.

Such thinkers appear to be using two definitions of freedom: on the psychological question they define freedom as indeterminism and refute it; on the political question they define freedom as the absence of constraint, and plead for it.

Why is it more usual to find the *simple* definition of freedom employed in the political question? Largely, I think because we all find ourselves talking of some communities and some people as being *more free* than others: very few would deny that I am saying something significant when I say: "A communist is more free in England in 1948 than in Germany in 1938."

I take it that no protagonist of human freedom in opposing the determinist theory believes that a man is *absolutely* free, that he is free in the sense that the *absolute* definition defines freedom. A man

## FREEDOM, DISCIPLINE AND BONDAGE

is not free, and nobody says that he is free, to swim the English Channel underwater, to hold a conversation with a rabbit or to walk upside down on the ceiling. The freedom which is postulated by certain philosophers is freedom within natural limits: freedom to wear a kilt or trousers, freedom to tell the truth or a lie, freedom to waste time or employ it to some purpose.

This may lead someone to suggest that the *correct* definition of freedom is the *absolute* definition, and that the libertarian philosophers might speak of the freedom they postulate as "limited freedom." The difficulty about this suggestion is that it is impossible on the *absolute* definition of freedom to apply such a qualifying adjective; it would be as absurd as the expression "rather unique." For either X is free or not free; by definition, *absolute* freedom does not permit of limitation.

Whatever case may be made for freedom on the *simple* or *rational* definition—and I believe there is a strong case to be made on each of them—against the determinist analysis, there is in my opinion, no case whatever to be made for saying that human persons are free in the absolute sense of "free."

I come now to summarize my observations. The word *freedom*, I have tried to show, has at least four different meanings as it is discussed in philosophy: these I have distinguished as *simple* freedom, *rational* freedom, *compulsory rational* freedom and *absolute* freedom.

Absolute freedom is an ideal concept: something that the human person does not and cannot experience. *Compulsory rational* freedom will have its place in a dictionary of philosophy, but will not find a place in a dictionary of ordinary usage. *Rational* freedom can be restated in terms of *simple* freedom, but *rational* freedom is considerably more elaborate as a definition and carries with it certain presuppositions as to the nature of the self, etc. *Simple* freedom involves the minimum of presuppositions; it has also been shown to correspond to what is meant by "freedom" in practically every context in which the word is used, but as a definition it suffers from want of precision.

I have pointed to dangers that arise from overloading the word with meanings it does not possess in common usage; dangers that arise from tightening the definition to make it more "exact" and formally satisfactory. The consequences of such philosophizing have rarely been to clarify, but more often to add to the ambiguity of the term.

I have not been able to point to any one as the *correct* definition, but I have found occasion to defend the *simple* definition against the objections of those who have furnished the more elaborate and rarified notions.

# PERSONALITY AND LIBERTY

OLAF STAPLEDON

Two rival passions are at work in men's hearts to-day, the cult of individuality and the cult of society. They give rise all too often to extravagant praise of liberty and to a no less extravagant insistence on discipline for society's sake.

It is impossible to form a balanced idea of the functions of liberty and discipline, or of the right relation between the individual and his social environment, without having a clear view of the nature of personality and community. I offer a brief and dogmatic sketch of this subject.

A personality is the product of the impact of the objective universe, past and present, on a particular experiencing subject.

I do not wish to imply that a "subject" is necessarily a substance (in the philosophical sense) or a metaphysical ego, or an immortal soul. Whether such eternal individual spirits exist or not, I do not pretend to know. I do not even, by the word "subject," pledge myself to what Professor Broad has called a "centred theory" of the nature of mind, I do not know whether a mind is a system of experiences united in an enduring centre, as the spokes of a wheel are united in the hub; or whether it is a centreless "net" of experiences all related together in a special way. By "subject" I mean only "that which experiences," whatever the true philosophical account of it. I mean the *seeming* focus or centre of experience and action. This focus is in some sense located in time and space, in fact it is located within the organism. For my purpose the subject is simply that to which experience happens, and that which responds with conscious behaviour. I do not wish to raise the epistemological problem. I merely assume the rejection of solipsism, and the reality of an objective universe which the individual experiences, however imperfectly.

Pure subjectivity is nothing but a completely featureless abstraction, a bare possibility of experience of some kind or other. It is through the intercourse of the subject with the objective universe that the subject assumes character and purpose. It "espouses" needs that are in principle objective to its own bare subjectivity. For instance it espouses the need of its own particular body for food, rest, sexual activity and so on. It is aware of its body as a going concern, and espouses its dynamic nature. It also espouses the dynamic needs of its own psychological self or person, its felt "me," which includes the need for fullness of personal life, for self-aggrandizement in a score of ways, such as intellection, constructiveness, self-respect,

and successful participation in society. These needs also are objective to it as subject. They emerge from the interaction of the external world and the inherited and acquired nature of its own body and psychical dispositions, the felt needs of its objective "me." The inherited part of its nature is itself the outcome of the intercourse of past environments and past subjects.

Not all its personal needs are necessarily espoused. Some are consciously rejected for the sake of other needs, deemed more important. Some remain hidden from view, "in the unconscious." Some, owing to unconscious influences, are presented to consciousness in a very distorted form.

The subject, the conscious individual, may espouse, in addition to his own personal needs, the needs of other persons, in so far as these happen to come within his mental horizon; or rather in so far as his horizon extends to include cognizance of other persons as actual centres of experience and activity. This espousal of other persons as ends, and not merely as means to *self-increase*, is seen most clearly in full personal love, of which I shall presently say more.

The needs which the subject espouses may be either the actual objective needs of persons, including his own personality and others, or they may be fictitious needs, or needs misconceived, owing to faulty cognition; as when one individual mistakes the character of another (or of himself); or when, in reading a novel, we desire the triumph of some imaginary person; or when we hypostatize an abstraction, and personify it. For instance, we may personify a group of individuals, such as a nation.

Subjectivity, is not to be thought of as simply the expression of an objective environment in a certain merely passive centre. The subject is itself active throughout, both in apprehending the environment, and in responding. And responding involves active espousal of the objective needs. The fact that the subject is not merely passive but active involves the possibility of error and perversion, and the espousal of merely illu-ory needs. A mind is no mere excerpt from the actual world, it is what the subject *does* with the world's impact on it. For instance, in intellection it may seek to pass beyond the given to the not-given, and in doing so it may make mistakes.

I cannot help employing the concepts of "growth" and "perversion." The growth of a personality seems to consist of increasingly accurate and comprehensive and integrated *awareness* of the objective universe, along with increasingly appropriate *feelings* about things in the universe, and the universe as a whole, and also increasingly appropriate, integrated and creative *action* in relation to the universe and its members. The "appropriate" attitude to any need (taken in isolation from other needs) is to espouse it. But of course needs conflict, and the less important may have to be sacrificed to the more



important. So far as I can see, the more "important" are those which either inhere in a wider objective field (the needs of two people, all else being equal, are more important than the needs of one person), or those which emerge on higher levels of the growth of personality, and are qualitatively better than those of the lower levels. This statement is, of course, very controversial, and calls for detailed discussion; but this cannot be attempted here.

The "perversion" of a personality (and of course we are all perverted in one way or another) consists of aberration from the true line of growth, owing to obsessive concern for some particular minor need at the expense of major ones.

At every stage of the growth of the personality the subject is prejudiced in favour of the more intimate and familiar objective needs against the more remote and the newly discovered. The incursion of new fields of objectivity, alien to the current habit of the personality, is always repugnant to the established self, which fights for its life against the impact of the wider vision. If it succeeds in rejecting the vision, it survives; but at the price of stagnation within the narrow and familiar horizon. Its obsessive concern with one familiar or obtrusive section of the objective field may permanently blind it to wider spheres of objectivity. On the other hand, the vision of a wider field of objective reality, or of new depths or heights of reality, may overpower the familiar, restricted, unregenerate self; so that, in the long run or suddenly, it is transformed, or even killed and reborn as an ampler and more awake self.

This process of dying and rebirth, through the incursion of new fields of objective reality into the personality, may, owing to untoward circumstances, be permanently checked at any stage; or it may continue from birth to death by imperceptible degrees. But this gradual growing may also be punctuated by occasional phases of profound and revolutionary change, which more obviously merit the description, "death and rebirth." Probably the first of these occurs when the infant wakes to the realization of itself as a continuing, conscious self, and of its mother as another self. Formerly it was interested only in sensory pleasures and pains, or (more accurately) in the intercourse of its body with the physical environment; but now it begins to be vaguely and disturbingly aware of "I" and "you"; and also of "we." And this "we" is an incomplete symbiosis of self-aware and other-aware persons, often in conflict, but sometimes mutually cherishing and mutually moulding.

In a sense, of course, this new kind of experience is a development of the earlier and purely sensory kind, but it cannot be fully described simply in terms of the "descriptive laws" of more primitive experience. It is a development of the range of awareness, in virtue of which a *new field of objectivity*, namely the field of personality and

## PERSONALITY AND LIBERTY

personal relations, intrudes into the incipient personality, presenting new values, not simply reducible to the old values. This new range of percipience may open up, little by little, the whole universe of personal intercourse, and the endless drama of the conflict between self-seeking and love.

Another of these revolutionary transformations of the personality may occur in adolescence, when the incursion of vast new fields of objectivity compels the young mind to "put off childish things." If, owing to some psychic trauma, interest still remains unconsciously fixed on the values of childhood, further awakening may become impossible.

At a later stage, another revolutionary change, gradual or sudden, may take the form of religious conversion. But there are two kinds of conversion, and only one of them is relevant here. A spurious conversion may be at heart nothing more than a passionately wishful reversion to ideas and values which should have been permanently outgrown. Of this kind is the religious experience that is mainly concerned with the conviction of individual salvation in a life to come. The genuine, the enlarging, the awakening kind of conversion is that in which, no matter what the doctrinal expression of the experience, the actual source of the revolutionary change in the personality is an intruding vision of new values emerging in the individual's intercourse with the world. Doctrines may sadly distort the genuine religious experience, and cramp the expanding personality. But the experience itself is a real waking to a new objective field of experience, and as such it is something capable of destroying the unregenerate self, and creating a new and ampler and more objectively aware self.

On the highest level, the process of waking to new fields of objectivity is perhaps best described as the discovery of the "spirit." By the "spirit" I mean not a metaphysical substance of any kind, certainly not a personal deity (of these I know nothing), but simply the ideal form of behaviour for all personal beings awakened to a certain level of self- and other-awareness. In fact "the spirit," whatever else it may be, is experienced simply as a way of life, as "the Way," as "Tao." It is the way of sensitive and intelligent awareness of the world, of precise and appropriate feeling about everything encountered in the world, and of appropriate, coherent and creative action for the expression of the spirit itself in the world. In fact the way of the spirit is the way of love and wisdom and creating in relation to the actual world.

This discovery of the spirit is first achieved, in an unclear and inarticulate way, when the young mind first genuinely loves, when it first becomes aware of "I" and "you" and "we," and finds that participation in a "we" is for it the way of life.

## PHILOSOPHY

Similarly in its early delight in simple skills the young mind begins to discover another aspect of the spirit, one which may develop into delight in aesthetic activity, or intellectual activity, or some form of creative social service. All this is revealed as intrinsically good because an expression of spirit, in fact as the appropriate intercourse of conscious beings and the objective environment.

The way of the spirit is essentially a way not for the isolated individual but for individuals in genuine community with each other. This is obviously true in the case of personal love and social service; but it is equally true, though less obviously so, in art and intellection. In their higher reaches these are essentially operations in and for a "we." And in the last resort the "we" is nothing less than the ideal community of all personal beings.

But fully awakened spiritual experience and conduct goes beyond sociality. The discovery of the spirit is not a fully "awakened" experience till it brings a profound conviction that, in some indescribable sense, individuals are essentially *instruments* for the manifestation of the spirit in their actual lives. The lover, for instance, must pass beyond the stage of simply cherishing the beloved, and simply delighting in the common "we." He must pass on to the conviction of the instrumentality of the two; and of the precious "we" itself, as indeed a vessel of something intrinsically good and of universal significance, in fact of the spirit. This fully awake discovery of the spirit is by no means inevitable. Indeed, it is probably rather rare. For most people, love is simply a cherishing of the beloved, and a delighted participation in the common "we," without any sense of universal significance. This incompletely awake experience of love is "opaque," so to speak, not translucent. But in the more awake kind of loving the whole experience is irradiated by a sense of possession by a vision of something universal, or at any rate a sense of the universal significance of loving. The lover may well incline to use theistic language and say, "God loves through me, and what I love through her is God." He feels that every word and act and gesture becomes symbolic. Along with its intense particularity, each act of love seems to echo the loves of all the generations, and to actualize here and now, once more, the spirit. Perhaps I should mention that love, of course, is not necessarily sexual. I have referred to sexual love because, on the whole, it is the simplest and most vivid example.

Not only love, but also the other humanly developed activities may be gateways to the discovery of the spirit. For instance (and to repeat) the passion for understanding, or the passion for creative imagination, may waken into the sense that the concrete activity is not only good in itself but also good as being instrumental to the spirit's expression. Thus the creative thinker feels, "God thinks in

## PERSONALITY AND LIBERTY

me"; the creative artist, "God creates through me." These expressions have certainly an important metaphorical truth.

But this sense of instrumentality is all too likely to lead to the insistence on precarious metaphysical doctrines as a logical explanation of the experience. The spirit may be interpreted as actually a personal God for whose purposes we are instrumental. About all such metaphysical explanations we must be rigorously agnostic. Out of very loyalty to the spirit, we must always remember that human intellect and human language are far too crude to make any reliable statements about such difficult matters. To be true to the spirit intellectually we must remain strictly sceptical. By all means let us speculate; but let us beware of using the fragile structures of our speculation as a foundation for our religion.

Nevertheless, this strict agnosticism must not lead us to dismiss the actual experience of instrumentality as sheer delusion, due (for instance) to spiritually irrelevant childhood happenings. For such theories themselves are fragile structures. The experience of the spirit is unmistakably an experience at the topmost range of human "awakeness," and should be allowed to exercise full sway in guiding us, even though we cannot yet properly theorize about it.

For the understanding of the life of the spirit, personal love is the key experience. Not only is it the most direct path to the discovery of the spirit, but also no man without experience of personal love can properly understand what community is in any sphere. And the essential nature of love (genuine love, and not mere possessiveness) is that the lover is captured, so to speak, by a new vision of objective reality, namely of another person, whose needs and powers, whose whole unique personality, he "espouses."

In all love there is of course conflict between the lovers, as self-regarding and mutually hungry individuals; but also, in all genuine love the conflict is largely transcended through mutual cherishing, and the creation of the common "we." Each freely and gladly accepts a firm self-discipline for the other's sake, and for the "we." Thus conflict itself becomes a source of enrichment. Each, as an individual personality, is moulded to a finer pattern, not without pain; and each rises to a higher plane of awareness. The prime motive of genuine love is not self-increase but sheer espousal of the other. Self-increase is, of course, incidentally sought, and does inevitably come. Or rather, the old self, though expecting increase, is transformed and destroyed; and an ampler self is born, a self which embraces the beloved, and the common "we", a self that may also come to be aware of the universal significance of love as a function of the spirit.

It is of extreme importance, particularly for the understanding of society, to realize that the common "we" is not a common "I," a sort of group-mind over and above the individual minds of the lovers.

## PHILOSOPHY

The "we" is a society of wholly distinct individuals of different characters, who freely espouse each other, and enter into a mutually moulding symbiosis. Love is essentially a freely willed partnership of independent beings, who gladly accept self-discipline, for the common "we." Maybe (I do not pretend to know) in our unconscious depths we are all rooted in a unified "collective unconscious"; but this is irrelevant to the understanding of conscious love.

Clearly this freely willed partnership of independent conscious beings is also what the good society should be, in any sphere, from the band of workmates to the ideal world-society of all mankind.

There are two prevalent false views of the good society. One is that it is simply an ingeniously contrived system of interdependent self-interests, in which each man, by looking after his own affairs intelligently and single-mindedly, contributes incidentally to the common good. Now it is true that in the good society self-interests must be so far as possible correlated in this way. Any healthy society must be, in the main, so adjusted that the self-interest of each finds its advancement in the service of all. But this system of inter-related self-interests is not all that the good society is. At bottom it must be a common "we"; not, of course of the same intimate kind as that of personal lovers, but none the less a consciously willed symbiosis of mutually cherishing and mutually moulding persons.

The other false view of the good society is that it is held together simply by gregarious feeling, that it is just a highly organized herd or ant's nest, in which each member is subjected utterly to the dictates of the herd. Each, of course, has his special function, but emotionally all conform to the herd pattern. And if anyone shows signs of eccentricity in behaviour or in thought, the herd at once imposes discipline. Here again there is no real common "we," but only an illusory common "I," a personification and deification of the herd. And the individual "I" itself becomes a mere shadow. It is prevented from being fully personal by its obsessive conformity to the herd conventions. And the discipline which it accepts, though not imposed by physical force, is none the less imposed. It is not genuine self-discipline, freely chosen by the lucid and independent personality.

In contrast, the true view of the good society is that it is neither merely individualistic nor merely gregarious, nor merely a mixture of the two. No society can be satisfactory unless it is held together not solely by these primitive impulses but also by the conscious will of its members for community. And this will for community is impossible save to those who have had some experience of the microcosmic society of personal lovers. Thus in the good society genuine personal love must be a widespread experience. And also the conscious recognition of the spirit as the supreme value must

## PERSONALITY AND LIBERTY

be sufficiently common to exercise an influence on the whole society. Needless to say, no actual society approximates to the ideal save in a very low degree; but in some actual societies the motive of genuine community is not a wholly negligible factor.

In case of misunderstanding, I had better repeat that, of course, in the good society all the members cannot possibly be united with each other in personal love. Obviously love is a relation which can exist only between individuals in close personal contact with each other. My contention is merely that if the tone of society is to be good, many of the citizens must know at first hand what love is. The argument may be summarized as follows: (1) No society can be healthy, or indeed truly civilized, unless there is among its members a fairly widespread, even if inarticulate, loyalty to the spirit, as such. (2) This loyalty is impossible save to those who have become at least vaguely aware of the spiritual aspects of their experience. (3) Socially the most important spiritual experience is the experience of community, of the co-operative life of persons diverse from each other but united in mutual awareness, mutual respect, mutual aid and mutual spiritual enrichment. (4) The fullest and most vivid expression of community occurs in personal love. (5) Only if they have experience of love can individuals distinguish between genuine community and its counterfeit, which is based on mere gregariousness or mere co-operative self-interests, or both. (6) The more comprehensive and attenuated forms of community, which alone can apply to large societies and to mankind as a whole, depend on the conviction that community as such is intrinsically good and an aspect of the spirit; and this conviction, this passionate generalization, is possible only to those who have some experience of personal love in one or other of its forms. (7) Finally, in a healthy and civilized society, where the conviction of the spiritual excellence of community is fairly widespread, even those individuals who have missed the experience of love may be so conditioned by the prevailing tradition of the society that they too will accept, at second hand, the principle that community is intrinsically good; but the tradition depends for its persistence and vitality in society on the actual experience of love.

Needless to say, for the creation of a healthy society much else is necessary as well as the experience of personal love. For instance, the society must be organized in such a way that no group of citizens has reason to feel unjustly treated, or in any way seriously frustrated and prevented from contributing to the co-operative life of the society.

Having stated my view of personality and of community, I can at last consider the problem of liberty. The controversy over liberty is all too often a mere squabble between champions of the two false

views of the good society. The one party assume that all restraint must necessarily be evil (though sometimes a necessary evil), because it limits the expression of individuality. The other party, regarding the individual as a mere unit in society, condemn his claim to freedom as silly or immoral. The only true happiness for the individual, they say, is that he should succeed in being an effective eye or hand or mouthpiece or mere tool of society.

The true solution of the problem of liberty follows from the true view of the nature of personality and community. But this principle has to be combined with a full realization of the imperfection of all existing societies and individuals, and the impossibility of maintaining such societies solely by applying the principles that are true for a fully developed society.

In the society of lovers there is no discipline save self-discipline. It is the very nature of love that it shall issue in free action for the sake of the beloved. Indeed it is of the very nature of personality that it shall act freely. In so far as a person is constrained by external authority, his personality is to that extent crippled. Personal action is spontaneous action in relation to a freely espoused objective field. If the field itself imposes action by physical violence or any other kind of constraint, the action is not fully personal but in some degree mechanical.

Further, the essentially personal kind of action is creative, in that it brings into being some bit of novelty that is significant for the individual or for other individuals. Creative action is essentially free, not in the sense that it is arbitrary or indeterminate, but in the more important sense that it is an expression of the subject's own personality and volition in relation to his whole environment. Creative action is in one sense determined by the environment (of physical events and personal needs); but it is determined through spontaneous subjective action, which, in virtue of its spontaneity, is always in some degree creative. Creative action can never be compelled to occur by external pressure. Of course, pressure may put the individual into such a situation that he may be stimulated into expressing his own free personal prowess in some creative act, so as to overcome the restrictions imposed on him; as when a man uses intelligence to overcome danger, or when a people is stimulated by a tyrannical social order into achieving a creative social revolution. But in every case the act itself has to be a spontaneous act of free personality. And such an act is only possible if the constraint has not gone far enough to destroy the personality of the agent. Robots, and also slaves whose personality has been completely subjugated, are incapable of creative action in any sphere, personal, political, intellectual, artistic or any other.

We may conclude that for the fulfilling of personality-in-com-

munity in the good society, a very high degree of individual liberty is necessary. Even in the good society, of course, there must be some discipline; but in the good society all discipline must be *at bottom* self-discipline, not externally imposed discipline. It must be self-discipline, imposed on the self-interested self by the socially aware self for the sake of the common "we"; or rather, strictly speaking, not simply for the common "we" but for the intruding vision of the spirit, which the actual "we" imperfectly manifests.

Incidentally, discipline is needed by the individual himself for proper growth. Only if he suffers some measure of tension between his individualistic impulses and his loyalty to a wider field of objectivity, will he be stimulated to the full expression of his powers. Freedom alone is not enough, even from the self-regarding point of view; if by freedom is meant irresponsible gratification of every impulse.

Further, not only self-discipline but even externally imposed discipline is in some measure sometimes necessary for the health of the individual personality. The normal individual needs, at some times in his life, to feel that in some respects, if he fails to discipline himself, if he "runs wild," if he lets self-interest triumph over public duty, society will in the last resort discipline him. The boy may need to be aware that, if his self-discipline should fail, the firm though friendly hand of authority would in the last resort constrain him. Similarly the ordinary citizen needs to feel that his self-discipline is backed by the firm authority of a benevolent but powerful law. But of course the authority of the law must be derived not from the arbitrary will of certain other individuals, or a class of individuals, or even the whole population; it must emerge from something which he himself does recognize as rightly authoritative. It must have not only might but right. It must wield the organized might of *the right*. And for the healthy personality the right is simply the rightness of the spirit. The only final right authority is the authority of the spirit. And only if the authority of society is felt to be in the last resort a truly spiritual authority or at any rate not hostile to the spirit, should the awakened personality accept it. Thus in a very metaphorical sense the ultimate authority may be called "theocratic," since it is the authority not indeed of a personal God, of whom, I submit we know nothing, but of the spirit, which confronts us in our actual living.

It follows that the justification for any restriction of liberty can never be simply the need to maintain public order, or to preserve existing social institutions. The only justification is, in the last resort, the need to prevent men of evil will from sinning against the spirit; for instance, by tormenting or seriously frustrating their fellow men.



Applying these principles to actual societies, we must always bear in mind that a society that is barbarian, or racked by internal conflict, or tormented by any kind of distressful circumstances, cannot attain the same degree of liberty as a relatively civilized, harmonious or contented society. It cannot, because, either the established government will itself restrict liberty for the sake of public order and its own survival; or else, if the state fails to do so, some powerful minority will usurp the power of the state, and itself restrict liberty. But in a relatively civilized society, where liberty is highly valued, where there is harmony and contentment and no real need to restrict liberty, a high degree of liberty will in fact be attained. Even so, it will only be attained if men struggle to attain it and maintain it. For governments, even the best, are inevitably concerned more to keep order than to foster individuality.

In view of this distinction between a relatively developed and sane society and relatively primitive or neurotic societies, it is foolish of the citizen of a relatively civilized and stable society to demand a very high degree of liberty in a barbarian or a gravely distressed society. But one thing he can and should demand, namely that there should be as much liberty as is consistent with restraining men of evil will from maltreating the innocent.

Champions of liberty are apt to say that the only cure for social disorder is on the one hand to eradicate its causes, and on the other to allow full civil liberty, including full freedom of expression. They triumphantly quote Voltaire's famous dictum about fighting even for the freedom of others to express detestable opinions. For relatively civilized and contented societies, this policy is certainly right. Even for relatively uncivilized societies, and for civilized but distressed societies, too, the all-important thing to do is to abolish the causes of disorder. But this may be a lengthy process; and anyhow a society cannot rise from barbarism to civilization overnight, or from neurotic exasperation to placidity in one stride. And until the population has become contented, has overcome its neurotic exasperations, and has been educated for liberty, it may be necessary to restrict freedom to some extent, not merely to protect the state or maintain public order (for the order may be a bad one) but to prevent men of evil will from tormenting innocent persons. Nay more, it may be necessary to restrict not merely freedom to use violence but also even freedom of expression, harmless as this may seem to the more doctrinaire kind of liberals.

In this connection the important points to recognize are these:—

(1) There are some acts which must in no circumstances be tolerated. Liberty to commit them should in no societies be allowed, because they flagrantly conflict with the most sacred principles accepted by all "decent citizens"; or rather, and more strictly,

## PERSONALITY AND LIBERTY

because to commit them is to "sin against the established vision of the spirit." Murder, rape, torture, are obvious examples. I would add, gross economic tyranny.

(2) Freedom to *advocate* these actions is in a special category. In civilized and contented societies it can be permitted, for it will persuade no one but a small minority of predisposed perverts. But in a barbarian society, or a society rendered neurotic by widespread distress, this liberty must be restricted either completely, or (in less dangerous social situations) at least to the extent of forbidding the use of the mechanical means of mass propaganda for such evil purposes. Only in this way is it possible to prevent irresponsible and skilled propagandists from goading fools and neurotics into organizing themselves for the torment of the innocent. In disordered societies it is surely better to restrict liberty, even the vital and seemingly innocuous liberty of mere expression, than to allow dangerous licence to knaves. But in truly civilized societies, and even in relatively civilized and contented societies such as our own, the need is for far greater and more equal freedom of expression.

In conclusion I will summarize, and mention a few additional points. To the mind that is sufficiently conscious of itself and others, and not perverted by irrelevant obsessions, the way of life which I have called the "spirit" appears as intrinsically good. Both individual and society are felt to be, in some sense, instrumental to the actualization of the spirit (so far as possible) in the life of each individual and society as a whole. In all social problems the ultimate criterion is simply the expression of the spirit as personality-in-community. This depends on the capacity for self- and other-awareness, and the capacity for "espousing" the needs of others. For the good society to be possible, there must be a widespread experience of personal love, and also some degree of the genuinely religious experience of the spiritual aspect of love and of all kinds of community. Individualism and gregariousness inevitably play a part in all societies, but the good society is one in which the will for personality-in-community is the controlling influence.

For the development of personality-in-community a high degree of some individual liberties is necessary. But we must distinguish those liberties that are necessary from those that are not. Necessary liberties include a high degree of freedom of expression, freedom of association, and freedom from economic tyranny. Without these, a population will consist not of responsible citizens but of a mixture of the slave-minded and the rebel-minded. Some liberties, though desirable in themselves, are not necessary for personality-in-community, and in times of stress they may be sacrificed without spiritually damaging the society. Of these, examples are: freedom to buy and sell as one pleases, freedom to employ others for personal profit,

freedom simply to idle. Finally, there are some liberties which, because they flagrantly violate the most sacred moral principles current in the particular society, must not be allowed at all. Of this kind, freedom to murder, torture and rape are well established examples. In our own age mankind is beginning to feel that the class of absolutely forbidden liberties should include freedom to use private money power to exploit the labour of others. A final point may be added. For a government to indulge in such practices as judicial murder and torture and gross perversion of the truth, even in a cause regarded as supremely good, is always bad, even if only for the reason that any advantage that might be gained by such practices is outweighed by the damage done to the moral custom of the society.

# PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

## PHILOSOPHY IN ITALY

It has come as a surprise to me to find in a book by a Jesuit<sup>1</sup> not only the most complete and fully documented exposition that I know of the philosophical conceptions of Russian Bolshevism, but also the most unprejudiced and modern judgment of it among many books by laymen on the same subject. As he has a good knowledge of the Russian language, and has succeeded in obtaining abundant documentary material, Wetter has been able to give us a genetic survey of Soviet Marxism which has all the greater value for us as a source of information as the author does not assume a polemical tone, but, while making here and there a few temperate observations, leaves the texts to speak for themselves, free from excessive critical intervention.

He begins by giving a brief history of Marxism in the West, then he proceeds to study the transformations the doctrine has undergone in Russia through the works of its earliest interpreters, among whom appears the dominating figure of Plechanov, later through Lenin, who set out the fundamental positions of Soviet Marxism; and finally, the developments of the two principal currents, mechanistic and Menshevistic, which Soviet orthodoxy has rejected, on the authority of Stalin.

The Western reader of these philosophical vicissitudes of Russian thought receives strange and conflicting impressions. At first he is struck by the intellectual fervour with which the Russians have set out on the conquest of Hegel and Marx. Anyone who is accustomed to place scientific problems in their appropriate theoretical setting without considering their immediate practical repercussions will be surprised to learn that in Soviet Russia those same problems are always considered in relation to the interest that the "party" has in one or other solution. Even the examination of Hegel's logic, from which the Soviet thinkers strive to wrest the secret of dialectical materialism, is conducted on these lines, so that the dialectical triads assume for us the unaccustomed mien of Trotskyism, Menshevism, and Leninism. But what is strangest of all is that the syntheses of the oppositions, instead of deriving from reason, spring from the authority of the great oecumenical councils of the party, as in the disputes of our own middle ages.

Thus in the controversy between the mechanists, who interpreted the evolution of history deterministically, and the followers of Deborin, who inclined towards idealism, the Central Committee of the party, in the resolution of January 25, 1931, decreed, in regard to a philosophical review, "that it should carry on an uncompromising war on two fronts: against the mechanistic revision of Marxism, as the greatest danger of that time, and equally against the idealistic perversion of Marxism by the group of Comrades Deborin, Karev, Sten, and others."

And, in accordance with the usual procedure in Russian politics, Deborin, after his condemnation by the supreme authority of the party, offered his submission, confessing that "he had strayed too far in the direction of Menshevistic idealism, and the separation of theory from practice, and publicly thanked the Central Committee, and before all, the head of the party, Comrade Stalin, for having held him back in time."

In this way philosophers become, to use Berdyaeff's expression, soldiers of

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Wetter: *Il materialismo dialettico di Hegel*, Einaudi, Turin, 1945.

## PHILOSOPHY

militant philosophy, posted on guard on the "philosophical sector of the theoretical front," where they have to carry out the orders and directives of the party majority, which "appears not only as the political organizing centre of the revolutionary movement, but also as its theoretical centre."

That philosophy thus treated is not destined to make much advance is evident to anyone who has some understanding of mental work. And in fact our author observes that whereas in the first years of the revolution the very fluidity of tendencies gave rise to a flourishing doctrinal development, since the dogmatic and authoritarian hardening of recent times there has been a great stagnation in speculation.

A new contribution has been made to a critical revision of Croce's historicism, initiated by myself in a recent volume,<sup>1</sup> by F. Battaglia's book<sup>2</sup> on value in history. The central theme of the criticism is the Hegelian concept of the rationality of the real, which Croce accepted in his view of the world, drawing a correspondence between philosophy and history. For me as for Battaglia the two terms do not correspond, but there is in rationality, and hence in philosophy, a value that goes beyond, while tending to express itself in, actual reality. The rational appears thus as what the real ought to be, as the spiritual exigence that urges reality into movement and progress towards perfection. Battaglia says: "As long as history is resolved in closed synthesis, in concluded and rational unification, it is vain to speak of value in history; the action of equating the certain and the true annuls the historical process, while an open synthesis reveals new perspectives. The very incompleteness of the synthesis, the internal margin of irrationality, gives to the rational an ever new integrative function." In other terms, it is only a separation of the rational values from the real that gives movement to history, that movement which is annihilated by the Hegelian equation of the rational to the real, and the historiography of Croce. Only a relative transcendence of values in face of empiric reality can create that fertile equilibrium that sets in motion operative activity and history. But as to the mode of understanding that transcendence, whether in a relative sense, as it appears to me, or in an absolute sense, as Battaglia will have it, that is a question that cannot be attacked in this brief survey.

Lastly, I wish to draw attention to a book by A. Corsano on Hugo Grotius.<sup>3</sup> It is preceded by a study on the successors of Erasmus which centres round the figures of Justus Lipsius, Joseph Scaliger (son of the more famous Julius Caesar), and Isaac Casaubon. The writer shows how the personality of Grotius is formed in this Erasmian environment and is developed in the religious struggles of seventeenth-century Holland. Grotius the jurist is left in the shade in this monograph, which gives greater relief to the man of religion and the theologian.

GUIDO DE RUGGIERO.

<sup>1</sup> G. de Ruggiero, *Il ritorno alla ragione*, Bari, Laterza, 1946.

<sup>2</sup> S. Battaglia, *Il valore nella storia*, Bologna, Upas, 1945.

<sup>3</sup> A. Corsano, *U. Grotius*, Bari, Laterza, 1948. (Translated from the Italian by Beatrice Allen.)

## PHILOSOPHY

Law and Morals he seeks to show how the recent change which anti-Individualist criticism has produced in our attitude to ordinary law is being reflected in a similar change of attitude towards international law: and in the essay on the Concepts of Juridical and Scientific Law he seeks to illuminate the distinction between these two concepts by asking how far a parallel can be found in the sphere of juridical law to the four doctrines of scientific law distinguished by Whitehead. Again, in the essay on Stammler's Philosophy of Law (though here the comparison is Stammler's rather than his own) the main point is that there is a parallel between Stammler's method and that of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and in particular that a fertile distinction can be drawn between the concept of law and the idea of justice along the same lines as that between the categories of the understanding and the ideas of reason.

The critical reader may complain that the book has many of the defects inevitable in a collection of essays composed at different times on different topics. There is undoubtedly some overlapping and repetition; and so many topics are discussed that the discussions can rarely be thorough and are sometimes not adequately clear. It will also be felt that, as in his previous writings, Professor Ginsberg is too much occupied with what sociology is, and too much on the defensive about it—in spite of his admission (p. 104) "that the time has long passed when it was necessary for sociology to justify its claim to existence or to indulge in weary discussion of the relation between sociology and other social sciences." Nor can it be denied that in most of his discussions, whether of what sociology is or of actual sociological and other problems, his modesty has driven him to devote too much time to the exposition and criticism of the views of other thinkers and not enough to anything that he may have to say on his own account. But he had a wide knowledge of the multifarious and complicated matters with which he deals; nor is he ever deserted by his caution and good sense. And though his own sociology, characterized as it is by these commendable qualities, may need no defence, the views of many of the sociologists whom he discusses seem much less defensible and are in any case of such a nature and diversity as to suggest that discussions of the standing and purpose of their science are still very much in place. Many readers too will welcome Professor Ginsberg's vigorous and continual protests against the irrationalist tendencies of much contemporary thinking, and his attempts to show that in social as in other matters the critics of reason, and of the things which seem to belong to reason, are often tacitly appealing to reason themselves.

There are more misprints than there should be in a book sponsored by a University institution.

O. DE SELINCOURT.

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*Moral Intuition and the Principle of Self-Realization. Henriette Hertz Lecture.*  
By C. A. CAMPBELL. (Oxford University Press. British Academy Proceedings, 5s. 6d. net)

Professor Campbell, ignoring subjectivist theories for lack of space, defends "the forgotten ethics of self-realization" against Intuitionist ethical theory. But, perhaps for the same reason, he plays Hamlet without the Prince, although he lucidly presents some of the minor characters.

He first distinguishes Intuitionist ethics, which asserts a number of kinds of act to be intuited as self-evidently obligatory, from Anti-Intuitionist ethics, of which he takes the self-realization theory to be a species. The latter, he holds, does not deny moral intuition (the antithesis might be better described as that of Pluralistic and Monistic Intuitionism), but regards only its own single supreme principle as a directly intuited obligation. "In respect

## PHILOSOPHY

*The Bhagavadgītā.* By S. RADHAKRISHNAN. (Allen & Unwin, 1948. Pp. 388. Price 10s. 6d.)

*Traduttore, traditori*, as the Italians tersely phrase it; and if to bad translation worse commentary be added how far astray might the innocent reader not be led. Of the Bhagavadgītā as of Lao-tze's Tao-Tê-Ching there are innumerable renderings into various European languages, and as for shallow modern commentaries on these works, intended for popular consumption, they appear with such frequency as to invite ruthless destructive criticism were they not already beneath all serious critical attention. There are, of course, notable exceptions, for some recent books on the Bhagavadgītā are obviously the result of a close and systematic study not only of the Bhagavadgītā itself but of the whole Vedantic system of thought out of which it flowered. I am not, however, speaking in disparagement of any of these when I say that Professor Radhakrishnan's work stands in a class by itself. Circumstances occasionally conspire to give an ideal translation of some particular masterpiece, and they seem to have done so in this case.

The Bhagavadgītā is a philosophic, religious work in Sanskrit in which the essential Hindu doctrines are presented as a unified whole in language of such fervour and with such a sure vision of truth as to raise the style far above that of the workaday prose of ordinary, expository, philosophical writings. Professor Radhakrishnan is a Hindu; he is a philosopher of international repute; he is a Sanskrit scholar and at the same time master of an effortless English style which must be the envy of many an English writer on philosophical subjects striving to find adequate expression for his thoughts. All the requisites for the production of the ideal translation of the Bhagavadgītā accompanied by an authoritative commentary are here, and Professor Radhakrishnan has not failed in producing what I, for one, feel sure will hold its own as the best work of this class in English.

Preceding the text and translation is an Introductory Essay of over sixty pages in which with admirable conciseness the philosophy underlying the Bhagavadgītā is set forth. The Sanskrit text is given in Roman script, and each stanza with its translation is followed by illuminating, interpretative notes, all the more interesting for the wide range and variety of the allusions and references in them, touching appositely as they do on such subjects as Christian Mysticism, Taoism, Neoplatonism and Sufism, and studded as they are with quotations from a delightful variety of philosophers, poets and theologians, ancient and modern, so that though the text and translation pursue their steady way from Dhṛtarāṣṭra's opening question to the sonorous closing words—*iti śrīmadbhagavadgītā upaniṣadāḥ samāptāḥ*; here the Bhagavadgītā-upaniṣad ends—the path of the reader, from which he can deviate at will, is diversified by all kinds of fascinating byways and rambling side-tracks.

As Professor Radhakrishnan is careful to point out at the very beginning of his Introductory Essay, the Bhagavadgītā is more of a religious classic than a philosophic treatise. But though designed as a popular summary of the Perennial Philosophy and not as an esoteric treatise, it is no watered-down synthesis in which what is truly significant in the Upanishads is distorted or lost. It derives from the Upanishads and is a masterly restatement of their central teachings but in such an inspired form as to achieve an independence of its own as an orthodox Hindu scripture not only coeval in authority with the Upanishads and Brahma Sutra but forming with them the prasthāna-traya or Triple Canon.

Though Professor Radhakrishnan rightly regards the Bhagavadgītā as a

brilliant synthesis bringing apparently conflicting currents of philosophical and religious thought into harmony with each other, the unity achieved is not such as to satisfy the strictly philosophic enquirer. Below the surface the fundamental metaphysical problems remain unsolved, and differing schools of thought in regard to them still confront each other unyieldingly. The integration seemingly achieved by the *Bhagavadgītā* is one of facade merely. Sankara, the idealistic-monist, and Rāmānuja, the realistic-dualist, keep to their respective camps and the questions which each in his own way attempted to answer are still the same old classic philosophic questions perplexing the minds of the thinkers of to-day.

Professor Radhakrishnan has been very persuasive in showing how the *Bhagavadgītā* has gone a long way towards fusing together many apparently incongruous elements in the Upanishadic teachings. To take one instance, it attempts rather by suggestion than by reasoned argument to reconcile the concept of the transcendent Brahma with that of a theistic, supreme spirit. From a more general standpoint the question of transcendence and immanence has been largely discussed by modern philosophers and theologians, and the idea of reconciling the two concepts has not presented much difficulty to adherents of schools of thought widely divergent in view in regard to other problems. It is understandable, therefore, that the synthesis suggested by the *Bhagavadgītā* should have found ready acceptance especially amongst those who feel that personal spiritual experience is of more value than dialectic in finding an answer to questions of this nature. But there are other problems in the attempt to solve which philosophers split into schools of thought not susceptible of being brought together even within the all-embracing synthesis of the *Bhagavadgītā*. Sankara's statement that the world of multiplicity is not real in itself but only so for those who live in avidya or ignorance, the only reality being Brahman who is without a second, is fundamentally irreconcilable with Rāmānuja's assertion that the world is real and unchangeably different from Brahman. No less so is Sankara's view that Brahman is above all predicates and beyond the grasp of intellect with Rāmānuja's doctrine that Brahman, the highest spiritual Reality, has attributes and is personal. These conflicting tendencies of thought on the part of the best-known commentators so far from revealing the many-sidedness of the *Bhagavadgītā* suggest rather that in drawing its inspiration from the Upanishads and largely accepting the traditional assumptions of past generations it failed to create a real organic unity.

Professor Radhakrishnan, though impressed by and speaking in terms of praise of the work of unification so admirably performed by the *Bhagavadgītā* for the masses, is, of course, well aware of the deep fissures in the metaphysical ground on which it stands. The plain man, representative of the masses, for whom the *Bhagavadgītā* was primarily intended is, however, easily satisfied on questions of metaphysical import, for with a delicate sense of intellectual propriety fortunately lacking in the truly philosophic-minded and in small children, he does not press for answers beyond a certain point. The earth rests on a tortoise, the tortoise on an elephant. Beyond this in such profound matters it would be unseemly to go. It is obviously for this reason that Professor Radhakrishnan is careful to stress the essentially religious character of the *Bhagavadgītā*, and to point out that its doctrine is not presented as a metaphysical system originating from some individual thinker or school of thinkers. A system of metaphysics is embodied in it but it does not give any arguments in support of its metaphysical position, and this is undoubtedly why it gives the impression of being more of a logically consistent whole than closer scrutiny reveals it to be.



But though varying currents are discernible in the broad stream of Upanishadic teachings, some of which appear to be cross-currents, it is clear that the general direction of the flow of Vedantic thought is towards a lofty idealistic monism, for its dominating conception is the Oneness of the Individual and the Absolute. This conception as elaborated in the Upanishads is not to be dismissed as mere shallow pantheism; there is no such facile thinking in Vedantic philosophy. The well-known Vedantic sayings: "*Tat tvam asi*," "*aham Brahma asmi*," and "*Brahma atman aikyam*," show that it is the Oneness of the Individual and the Absolute which is the keynote of the Vedantic doctrine and not the vague pantheistic generalization that God is all. Nor should it be confused with solipsism though both Vedantism and solipsism agree in declaring the sole reality of the self. The Vedantist, in fact, starts from an uncompromisingly realistic standpoint and does not at any stage, considering it to be mistaken, simply abandon it in favour of an idealistic position. Unlike the solipsist the Vedantist does not maintain that other selves are merely his experience. He acknowledges their reality but identifies himself with them. For him both the reality and the knower of it are real, and if the case rested here the Absolute of Vedantism would not differ essentially from the realistic One of the Eleatics. But it is just at this point that through the very realistic form itself we discern the transformation which has been effected, for the world is here identified with the knower in so far as he is the knower of the unity. In this identification of the knower and the known we have by an abrupt though natural transition a change-over from realistic monism to idealism of the type generally associated with Eastern mysticism. For the solipsist other selves are illusory; for the Vedantist the illusion consists in his thinking they are other than himself. Through *māyā* he suffers the illusion of separateness, of diversity.

A short review is not the place in which to discuss the epistemology of the Vedanta much of which hinges on this concept of *māyā* or illusion as it is, with questionable accuracy, usually interpreted. Professor Radhakrishnan has elsewhere suggested "appearance" as the proper rendering of the term, and this is perhaps as near as we can approach to the intended meaning. Professor Radhakrishnan, however, with a fairness of mind sometimes lacking in philosophers pleading a special cause, allows for differences of interpretation and in his Introductory Essay lists the various senses in which the word "*māyā*" is used and indicates its place in the *Bhagavadgītā*.

Perhaps too much stress has been laid in this review on the philosophical aspect of the *Bhagavadgītā* and it is as well to conclude with a reminder that the *Bhagavadgītā* is essentially practical in its aims, and its extraordinary popularity and influence in India is due not to the subtle ontological or epistemological views embodied in it so much as to its doctrine of an active life inspired by the idea of self-abnegating devotion to the divine within us.

LEO C. ROBERTSON.

✓ *Explanation in History and Philosophy.* The Symposia read at the Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association at Cambridge. July 4th-6th, 1947. (Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume XXI.) London: Harrison & Sons, Ltd. 1947. Pp. 218. 21s. net.

Plenty of painstaking thought has gone into all these contributions but the address by Professor C. D. Broad is the only one which seems to me to rise to philosophical heights. There is a breadth and comprehensiveness about Professor Broad's thesis which makes it one of the best examples of the kind of thinking he is urging philosophers to undertake in the modern world, that is,

## NEW BOOKS

synoptic and interpretive thinking, which brings the conclusions of the sciences together in a synthesis by discovering common principles of explanation in each. In this way the different departments of knowledge react on one another and even, in a sense, give one another a kind of mutual aid. To take one example given by Professor Broad, Bergson's hypothesis of the brain as limiting, not creating consciousness becomes more plausible in the light of facts revealed by psychical research. Thus a principle of explanation adumbrated in one branch of science is given added cogency when it is found to be applicable to another.

In the symposium entitled "The Character of a Historical Explanation," A. M. MacIver, W. H. Walsh, and Professor Morris Ginsberg tackle the problem of what explanation in history really means. Mr. MacIver is sturdily objective. He holds that the function of the historian is indeed to generalize, and to generalize on different "levels," but always in accordance with what really happened in the past. That is to say, he postulates a "past-in-itself." Mr. Walsh agrees, but thinks the historian should ask why things happened in the way they did and follows Collingwood in holding that history is the result of the thinking of past generations and that it is by re-thinking the thought of the past that historians understand it. But, as Professor Ginsberg points out, he is using the term "thought" in a very wide sense and even comes near to postulating something which can only be called "unconscious thought," a contradiction in terms if ever there was one. Professor Ginsberg's approach appears to be largely that of the sociologist. He holds that historical explanation is similar in kind to the truth sought by the social sciences.

The second symposium deals with the question "Are Necessary Truths true by Convention?" and K. Britton, J. O. Urmson, and W. C. Kneale display the dauntless perseverance and subtlety of the Scholastics in pursuing the subject through the mazes of up-to-date logic. Mr. Kneale seems to me to introduce some welcome clarification and he is the only contributor who suggests, though not explicitly, that there are certain necessities of thought behind the "conventions" within which necessary truths are true.

The question "Does Psychology study Mental Acts or Mental Dispositions?" is discussed by W. B. Gallie, W. H. Sprott, and Professor C. A. Mace. Mr. Gallie thinks that mental acts are not studied by psychologists; Mr. Sprott thinks they are. Professor Mace seems to hold that "relations" between acts are the proper study for psychology. The idea that psychology ought to study human personality as a whole and from every angle is apparently not envisaged by anyone.

In the last symposium, "The Problem of Guilt" is discussed by H. D. Lewis, J. W. Harvey, and G. Paul, and is important because of a valuable point made by Mr. Lewis who, it seems, is the first (with the exception of Dr. Joad) to face the facts about the psycho-analytic theory of morals. Most people shirk uncomfortable facts; Mr. Lewis, with courage and logic, looks them straight in the face. He sees that if what used to be called "the moral sense" is no more than an accidental result of subjective reactions to infantile experience, the whole concept of morality dissolves into nothingness and with it one of the richest and most satisfying elements in human experience. The fact that psycho-analysts will sometime themselves assume a highly moral attitude on some matters only proves that, like some theologians, they are better than their creed and do not trouble their heads about logic.

I. M. HUBBARD.

*The A Priori in Physical Theory.* By ARTHUR PAP. (New York: King's Crown Press; London: Geoffrey Cumberlege. 1946. Pp. 112. Price 13s. 6d.)

In this concise and welcome essay the author reinterprets Kant's classical doctrine of the synthetic *a priori* in terms of the "functional" *a priori*. He defines the *a priori* as "truth which need not be established by experience and which cannot be refuted by experience." Theories which have an empirical origin are classed by him as *a priori in function*, in so far as they are used in subsequent investigations to interpret factual data. This concept arises from reflection on the working methods of men of science. As a rule, when confronted with apparently contradictory facts in a particular field, men of science first examine the possibility that these are due to some hidden factor in Nature rather than to fundamental theoretical error.

The essay, which owes much to the influence of Cassirer and C. I. Lewis, is divided into two parts. In the first, the author considers the general theory of "The Functional *A Priori*" in four chapters, viz. 1. Lewis's Conception of the *A Priori*; 2. Dewey's Distinction between "Universal" and "Generic"; 3. Transformations of Inductive Generalizations into Definitions; 4. Analytic Functioning of Empirical Laws. In the second part the author considers a particular application of his general theory, "The Application of the Functional *A Priori* to Newtonian Mechanics." It comprises three chapters, viz. 1. Newton's Laws of Motion; 2. Kant's "Principles of Experience"; 3. Idealization in Physics. The book concludes with a list of references to various points in the text and an excellent select bibliography of articles in periodicals as well as books. The latter, presumably, covers those books and articles which the author has found most useful in developing his thesis, but he appears to have overlooked Hertz's *Principles of Mechanics*, the introductory chapter of which, in the opinion of the reviewer, should be omitted from no bibliography of the literature dealing with the foundations of Natural Philosophy.

Hertz laid particular stress on the importance of distinguishing between those elements in Natural Philosophy which arise from necessities of thought, from experience and from arbitrary choice. "We are convinced," he wrote, "... that the existing defects (in textbooks of mechanics) are only defects in form. . . . But the dignity and importance of the subject demand, not simply that we should readily take for granted its logical clearness, but that we should endeavour to show it by a representation so perfect that there should no longer be any possibility of doubting it." Writing thus, in the 'nineties, Hertz went on to point out that "to many physicists it appears simply inconceivable that any further experience whatever should find anything to alter in the firm foundations of mechanics. Nevertheless, that which is derived from experience can again be annulled by experience." Over half a century has elapsed since Hertz wrote, and we now realize that the foundations of classical mechanics were as imperfectly understood then as were the foundations of geometry a century before.

Kant's theory of the *a priori* was based on his analysis of classical mechanics. Mr. Pap shows that analysis of Newton's laws of motion in the light of more recent theory leads to the conclusion that these laws are "synthetic *a priori*" in the sense of defining a method of analysing motions. These laws, he maintains, are therefore of a different type from the law of gravitation. Although agreeing with his view of the laws of motion, the reviewer believes that the distinction thus drawn between them and the law of gravitation is mistaken. And it is here that we encounter the fundamental weakness in an otherwise excellent essay, for it is clear that no account has been taken of the recent

## NEW BOOKS

work of Milne on the foundations of Natural Philosophy, wherein it has been demonstrated that both the law of gravitation and the laws of motion, with certain "relativistic corrections," are deductive consequences of a definite concept of scientific method and are, therefore, equally normative in character. *A posteriori* considerations determine the actual phenomena to which they can be applied and the degree to which they assist us in analysing these phenomena. Admirable though Mr Pap's essay is in many respects, the world is still waiting for someone to write the twentieth century counterpart of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*.  
G. J. WHITROW.

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*Logical Studies* By HAROLD H. JOACHIM (Clarendon Press. Price 18s.)

As Wykeham Professor of Logic at Oxford, Joachim delivered each year during the period 1927-35 a course of lectures entitled "Logical Studies." This book has been prepared by Mr L. J. Beck from the frequently, but not finally, revised manuscript of these lectures. Anyone who heard Joachim lecturing will remember that he was conspicuously a literary lecturer; each lecture was carefully designed and written, and beautifully delivered, and there was little evidence of afterthought or improvisation. Consequently the manuscript of his lectures has been made, after only quite trivial emendations, into a book which nowhere betrays the raggedness of normal manuscript lectures. The literary elaboration of Joachim's style, both as lecturer and writer, must be stressed in any appreciation of him as a philosopher, for Joachim, like Bradley his master, had a very acute literary (and sometimes almost musical) sense of the suggestiveness and splendour of certain words or phrases, and this literary, as opposed to purely intellectual, response to philosophical words and phrases certainly influenced, and perhaps even dominated, his philosophical thinking. When he wrote and lectured on Spinoza, what he most clearly communicated was not the logical connections between the propositions of Spinoza's system, but the magnificence of the concepts or phrases which occur in the system, and the euphony and (in a largely aesthetic sense) the coherence of the system as a whole; he seemed to appreciate the Infinite Attributes and the Immanent Cause for their own sake, almost for the sake of the sound of the words and their reverberations and associations, rather than for their place in Spinoza's harshly logical and almost positivistic arguments.

By Bradley and the British Idealists generally philosophy was assimilated to a literary exercise, as by some contemporary philosophers it has been assimilated to a mathematical discipline. They thought naturally in images and metaphors, and formal reasoning, that is, argument in which the associations of words are disregarded, was emotionally repugnant to them, as unsuggestive, over-simple, unilluminating, and therefore not philosophy. There is scarcely a page in this book, and sometimes scarcely a sentence within a page, which does not contain a more or less elaborated image or metaphor; certain master-images recur throughout the book as its central theme and purpose; one is inclined to say that the argument is largely constructed with images and metaphors, and cannot profitably be examined and criticized unless the critic abandons any attempt to disentangle any wholly literal and narrowly logical thread of argument. But perhaps "argument" is a misleading word in this context, because it suggests more or less formal or strict inference, the process of showing that one kind of statement follows logically from another kind of statement. This book certainly contains some arguments in this strict sense, but they are not the substance of the book. It is the duty of the reviewer to state what the substance is; and this is made both more difficult and more necessary by the fact that

Joachim, following Hegel and Bradley, uses the word "logic" to stand for a type of inquiry which is wholly different in method and purpose from anything which either the layman or most philosophers would now call logic. It is not the case that Joachim, following Hegel and Bradley, applies a rather different method to answer rather different questions within a common subject or discipline conventionally recognizable as logic; he is concerned with a wholly different subject, in the sense that anyone comparing the contents of this book with the contents of any standard text-book of logic would find as much, and as little, common subject-matter as he would in comparing (for example) a text-book of astrology with a text-book of astronomy.

The subject-matter of logic, Joachim says, is "knowledge-or-truth"; logical facts are "concrete" (not abstractions), and they "emerge" or are discovered in speculation, and are indeed inseparable from the process of speculation. I think—but I may very well be wrong—that, paraphrased in more familiar language, Joachim's intention is to describe, more vividly than ordinary language ordinarily allows, the phases or stages through which we pass in acquiring organized knowledge of any kind; by "logic" he seems to mean a more than ordinarily vivid description of the process of thought in systematic science or learning. If something like this is what he means, his unashamed and often (from a non-logical point of view) successful use of imagery (usually biological rather than mechanical) can be understood and defended. His criticism, both implied and explicit, of what is conventionally called logic seems to be that it does not describe, in the sense of communicating vividly, the process of fitting together, by successive approximations, statements which can only be understood, accepted or rejected, as parts of a system of knowledge. "We must not be led astray by this or that interpretation which is put upon 'knowledge' or 'truth' in other logical theories or in popular discussion"; it is reasonable to insist, as he everywhere does, that ordinary use of logical or semi-logical terms is not to be taken as authoritative, if his whole purpose is to provide a more vivid description of the process of acquiring knowledge than can be provided if words like "truth" and "knowledge" are normally or correctly used; he is not analysing and clarifying the normal use of logical terms, but introducing new uses. "Perhaps it is less misleading to speak of the total self-development—the infinite dialectic, the infinite self-analysis and self-synthesis—in (and as) which reality takes intelligible shape, and manifests itself as knowledge-or-truth. Yet even this way of speaking may still be misunderstood. For the 'reality,' which 'takes shape' and 'manifests itself,' is nothing behind and apart from the discoveries these metaphors describe. That which 'takes shape' is, here, one with the taking shape and with the shape it takes: 'reality,' here, is all of this, and the whole of it, and nothing less than it. And if 'reality' 'manifests itself as knowledge-or-truth,' *this* reality *itself* clearly is the manifesting and the manifestation." In a sense, and in the ordinary sense, this is plainly nonsense; the author has deliberately taken it upon himself to use words like "reality" in his own way for his own purposes and not in accordance with any recognizable conventions of ordinary use. But is it useful, illuminating nonsense? Granted that passages of this kind cannot be understood (or misunderstood) literally as true-or-false statements, does this calculated misuse of language seem to draw attention to or to describe some feature of the growth of knowledge, which is not reflected in conventional logical terminology?

This is perhaps largely a subjective question; my own response is "no." I do not recognize in sentences of this kind even *possible* descriptions of the growth of knowledge in any science or branch of learning, except conceivably history. It is the great weakness of the British Idealists that they rarely supply

examples; and without particular examples of the type of thought or knowledge to which they are referring, it is almost impossible to decide what they are talking about; generalizations about Thought or Knowledge, without specification of examples, must float in the stratosphere of absolute vagueness. But, when one searches for an example of the processes which they describe, what if anything suggests itself is generally a specimen of the development of historical, rather than scientific, knowledge; their "logic," deriving from Hegel, was largely a metaphysical interpretation of historical method, and seems utterly remote from the experimental sciences; and logic, as the word is ordinarily applied, is largely a description of the methods of the experimental sciences and of mathematics.

These lectures are, at the very least, of great historical interest as the record of a phase in English, and particularly Oxford, philosophy which, although so recent, seems now so remote. They are a reminder that modern logic is a fragile and recent growth, at least in English universities, and that untrammelled speculation in philosophy, however great the devotion and literary talent of the individual philosopher may be, may become wholly remote from the interests of a succeeding generation. The care and intensity of Joachim's thought is evident on every page; but, because he does not state his problems either in familiar language or in any precisely prescribed technical language, most readers will find it very difficult to decide what these problems are or whether he has answered them.

STUART HAMPSHIRE.

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3 *Science and the Meanings of Truth*. By MARTIN JOHNSON. (London: Faber & Faber, Ltd 1946. Pp. 179. Price 12s. 6d.)

The nature of truth is the outstanding intellectual problem of our age. It confronts us in every context, religious, scientific, moral and political; and Dr. Martin Johnson has performed a valuable service in directing our attention to the problem as it presents itself to the theoretical physicist. In this highly interesting and significant essay he poses the question: "In what sense today can physical explanations of Nature and theories of cause and effect be regarded as true?" In the first part, which comprises more than half the essay, he examines the traditional methods of "approach to truthfulness" in the logic of science and their recent modifications by Bohr, Heisenberg, Einstein, Dirac, Eddington and Milne among theoretical physicists and by Russell and Whitehead among philosophers. He emphasizes the prevailing tendency for scientific explanation to be conceived in terms of mathematical concepts rather than in terms of mechanical models as was fashionable a generation or more ago. The author examines this change of perspective in the light of recent work in logical analysis, notably of Bertrand Russell's investigation of the structure of logical propositions. He suggests that the aim of the men of science should be to obtain "communicable knowledge" which should be judged to be "true" by the degree of "coherence" between its different aspects to different "observers." "Scientific knowledge therefore must lose any claim to be completed in the mind of any single investigator, and becomes judged by the body of interrelated propositions connecting the experiences of a whole community." This view, however, leads the author to ask "what have the communicable and coherent patterns constituting truth in the physicist's mind to do with the supposed objects perceived as our external world?"

In the second part of the essay the author compares the type of reasoning now employed by theoretical physicists with the views of various philosophers on the nature of knowledge, particularly the Realist treatment of perception

and the Idealist conception of "coherence." Russell's theory that the external object is simply the correlation of the aggregate of individual perspectives is shown to be suggestively analogous to the point of view of Heisenberg and the other creators of Relativity and Quantum Mechanics.

Finally in the third part of the essay, the author considers those aspects of the world which lie outside what he considers to be the scientist's criterion of truth. "We no longer live in the arrogance of uncritically advancing early science which supposed there to be nothing worth mentioning from experience except that which was describable in physical terms. . . . The problem arises what is to replace our scientific criteria of definitions of truth in these judgments of value? . . . The clue to any useful analogy between the "truth" of a scientific explanation of experience and the judgment that some element of experience conveys Beauty or Goodness, seems to me to emerge from . . . 'Pattern' . . . a work of art is judged by the communication it achieves from artist to public, the vehicle of the communication being the structure of a pattern. . . . Art thus acquires quite abstract characteristics. . . . It might well be argued that ethical criteria are also those of a pattern, 'goodness' being the quality of contributing to harmonious interlocking of free behaviour among individuals and judged as communicable coherence of intention and practice."

By way of contrast to this alleged similarity between the physical and spiritual aspects of the world, the author concludes by examining what he considers to be a fundamental dissimilarity. Following Milne, he maintains that in the physicist's pattern of the universe the fundamental category is that of time, but in the "world of Values, temporal order may . . . not have the simple and controlling significance which it undoubtedly has in the physical world." This difference appears to the reviewer to be vital, and it is a pity that Dr. Martin Johnson has not taken the opportunity to examine it more thoroughly, for the problem of truth in the natural sciences, just as in other spheres of thought and action, is essentially a problem of values.

Since the eighteenth century it has gradually dawned, first on mathematicians and later on men of science and philosophers, that the classical axioms of geometry, and of other rigorous mental disciplines, are not merely "self-evident truths" to be taken for granted to the exclusion of possible alternatives. But when we abandon this naive theory of the nature of axioms what criteria are we to adopt in choosing our axioms? Are we to be guided solely by purely logical criteria such as self-consistency and non-redundancy, or are we also to be guided by non-logical standards of "significance" and "value"? It is well known that the pure mathematician has tended to follow the former course, described by Bertrand Russell in his famous epigram: in pure mathematics we never know what we are talking about or care whether what we are saying is true. (As in the case of most epigrams, the implications of this one are only partially true. Most pure mathematicians exercising their new-found liberty of thought have been guided in their choice of problems by some non-logical criterion of "significance," for example, aesthetic.) The influence of this new point of view in pure mathematics has extended far beyond geometry and algebra. It has been decisive in the development of Logical Positivism and the widespread belief that philosophers should confine their attention to the meticulous analysis of language, eschewing the traditional problems of "significance" and "value."

This negative attitude towards truth on the part of reasonable and worthy men has been most unfortunately supplemented by the deliberately destructive attitude of cynical and dangerous men who positively hate the idea of absolute and eternal truth. "What is Truth": said jesting Pilate; And would not stay for an Answer." "Truth," said Nietzsche, "is a mobile army of meta-

## NEW BOOKS

phors, metonomies and anthropomorphisms . . . Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions." Kant's great discovery that the mind is an actor and not just a spectator in its study of the world has been perverted to base ends. The fallacy of "historism," so brilliantly exposed by K. R. Popper in *The Open Society and its Enemies*, is based on such a perversion. "The transvaluation of all values," "All truth is relative," "Might is right"—these slogans have culminated in the recent threats by Mr. Zhdanov to Russian philosophers who are guilty of "objectivism." As Polanyi has warned us in a recent pamphlet on *The Foundations of Academic Freedom*, "If truth is not real and absolute then it may seem proper that the public authorities should decide what should be called the truth."

The neglect of the sociological aspect of the problem of truth is a serious deficiency in Dr. Martin Johnson's essay, because his conception of truth in terms of "communicability" is essentially sociological in character. Moreover, he fails to stress the ethical character of modern science. It is flagrantly untrue to assert, as so many of our moralists have, that the man of science *qua* man of science is "ethically neutral." Instead, he must adopt a high moral code of intellectual honesty and self-criticism and must cultivate the freedom of an open mind. There is, in fact, a tacit Hippocratic code of mental behaviour to which he should adhere. Bertrand Russell has recently expressed the spirit of this code in words of crisp simplicity: "It is not *what* the man of science believes that distinguishes him, but *how* and *why* he believes it. His beliefs are tentative, not dogmatic; they are based on evidence, not on authority or intuition" (*History of Western Philosophy*, 1946, p. 549). The belief that truth is objective and absolute, whereas *present knowledge* is human and fragmentary, is the origin of that fruitful humility which has always inspired the greatest men of science.

G. J. WHITROW.

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*S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi Opera Omnia*. Edited by F. S. SCHMITT, O.S.B., Edinburgh. Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd. 1947. 3 volumes. Pp. viii, 290; 288; xvi, 294. Price £2 2s. net per volume.

In his preface to the Works of St. Anselm Father Schmitt announces that the whole edition will comprise six volumes. The first three of these, which were printed at Seckau in 1938 and destroyed by the Nazis in 1942, were photoprinted at Edinburgh in 1946, and have been published by Thomas Nelson and Sons. The volumes are certainly expensive; but they could hardly be anything else; and all who are interested in mediaeval philosophy will be grateful to the publishers for this handsome and beautifully printed critical edition of St. Anselm's Works. In view of the fact that St. Anselm was Archbishop of Canterbury there is a certain appropriateness in a British publisher offering hospitality to this edition by an Austrian scholar.

The first volume, which includes four phototype plates, contains the works composed by Anselm as Prior and then Abbot of Bec. The second volume, furnished with three plates, comprises the works written by Anselm as Archbishop; while the third volume contains the prayers or meditations and the first book of letters (written by Anselm as Prior and Abbot), with one plate. The fourth and fifth volumes are to contain the letters written while Anselm was Archbishop, while the sixth will contain the fragments, a discussion of the edition, and indices. Father André Wilmart had undertaken the edition of the text of Anselm's prayers or meditations; but his death prevented the final completion of the task, and the text he had prepared was revised by Father Schmitt. The whole edition will certainly supersede the inadequate edition of Gerberon, which is to be found in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*.



Eadmer's life of Anselm, which precedes the Saint's Works in the Patrology, is not included by Schmitt; but an edition by R. W. Southern is included in the list of "Medieval Classics" being issued under the general editorship of Professors V. H. Galbraith and R. A. B. Mynors.

From the purely philosophical point of view the first volume is the most important, though the *De concordia praescientiae et praedestinationis et gratiae Dei cum libero arbitrio*, included in the second volume, contains philosophically relevant matter. St. Anselm is of importance in mediaeval philosophy chiefly for his development of natural theology, as seen in the *Monologion* and the *Proslogion*. Though most emphatically one of the *Sancti et theologi* Anselm represented a position of moderation in the controversy between dialecticians and anti-dialecticians. Refusing to side with those who regarded dialectic as a superfluity and a danger to true religion, he yet employed dialectic, not in order to build up a philosophical "system," an idea which would be quite foreign to him, but in pursuance of his general aim of understanding the data of the Christian faith. One can, it is true, validly contrast the respective attitudes of Anselm and Thomas Aquinas in regard to philosophy, since St. Thomas made a clear formal distinction between philosophy and dogmatic theology whereas St. Anselm did not, partly because of his adherence to the Augustinian tradition and partly for the simple fact that this distinction could hardly be made until philosophy had evolved and become self-conscious; but one can just as well group Anselm, Bonaventure, and Thomas together as theologian-philosophers who philosophized against the background and in the light of theology in contrast with the later integral Aristotelians and the Professors of the Paris Faculty of Arts who separated philosophy from theology in a way which not even St. Thomas would be prepared to countenance. In other words, the contrast between the attitudes of Anselm and Thomas can be overdone, though it certainly has a foundation in fact.

St. Anselm's name immediately calls up memories of the "ontological argument" for God's existence, which is given in the *Proslogion* and which was so woefully misunderstood by the monk Gaunilo. But though this argument is often called the "Anselmian argument," it is by no means his only argument; at the beginning of the *Monologion* he gives several, based on the idea of degrees of perfection and on the idea of participation. They would not be considered very convincing by modern philosophers; but they are of interest as showing the influence of the Platonic and Augustinian traditions on Anselm's thought. He also treats philosophically of the nature and attributes of God.

As to the so-called "ontological argument," St. Anselm makes it quite clear that the notion of God as absolute perfection is furnished by faith, though the atheist can understand what is meant by the idea. The absolutely perfect being has then an existence in the mind of the atheist, a subjective existence and, according to Anselm, a necessity of thought logically compels the mind to recognize that the absolutely perfect being cannot have merely subjective existence, but must exist objectively, extramentally. The starting point of the argument is thus the idea of the God in Whom we believe, and the conclusion is the admission of the objectivity of this idea. Some modern scholars have objected to the purely logical interpretation of this argument and have tried to interpret it in a Cartesian manner, i.e. as presupposing that the idea of the perfect can be explained only by the objective existence of the perfect being which is the source of the idea of our minds. I cannot say that these scholars have altogether convinced me that this is precisely what Anselm meant; but in any case, though the argument has been rejected by philosophers like St. Thomas and Kant, the fact that it has reappeared in variant forms in the

## NEW BOOKS

systems of such different thinkers as Bonaventure, Descartes, Leibniz, and Hegel, shows that it cannot be as contemptible as Gaunilo supposed. If one is a logical positivist, one will, of course, immediately rule the argument out of court; but though I should hesitate to accept it as valid, I do not think that it is meaningless. Nor do I think that it can be refuted simply by saying that it confuses the logical and real orders.

There are several welcome signs that British philosophical circles are at length awakening to the realization of the fact that the Middle Ages did not constitute a foul-smelling marsh, or even a desert, in the history of philosophy; and it is to be hoped that British scholars will make an important contribution in this field, especially as not a few of the better known mediaeval philosophers were British. St. Anselm, though Archbishop of Canterbury, was not a native of Great Britain; but he was the first mediaeval philosopher of any real stature after the lone and strange figure of the Irishman, John Scotus Eriugena, and his name is an important one in the development of mediaeval philosophy, even if his thought is not as interesting as that of Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, or William of Ockham.

F. C. COPLESTON, S.J.

*Quelques aspects de la Philosophie Védantique.* By Swami Siddheswarananda, "Vande Mataram" II, 4e Série, Février-Juin 1942. Adrien-Maisonneuve, Paris 1945.

This book, which consists of 13 "causeries" (90-102), an introductory note by M. Paul Dottin, a preface by the author, and a Sanskrit-French Glossary, is intended to introduce the student to the main principles of Indian Philosophy. In spite of its title, the book does not limit its scope only to the Vedānta, but extends its subject to the Vedas, the Sāṅkhya, the Bhagavadgītā and kindred theological and philosophical works, which no doubt are of significance if a glimpse into the total background and structure of Indian Philosophy is to be caught.

The book, which is not without aspirations to be a synthetic work on Indian Philosophy, would have considerable value for an uninitiated pupil, were it not for some features that will necessarily lead to misrepresentation of the fundamental problems. The author, who is profoundly influenced by Rama-krishna's philosophy, arbitrarily modifies the particular systems so as to adjust them to the ideas read into them by his master. As a direct consequence of this method, quotations of well recognized texts are interpreted to suit the occasion for which they were picked.

The method of unrestrained admiration for everything that has originated from India makes the author see monotheism in the Rig-Veda, and in the institution of castes a boon for the nation. Non-philosophical concepts are speculated upon as highly philosophical (e.g. the concept of *māyā* in the Rig-Veda) and early portions of the Vedas are interpreted in the light of later additions such as, for instance, hymn X. 129 of the Rig-Veda. In the light of Siddheswarananda's book one hardly dares to put forward the question: Did India ever find herself in a primitive state of culture, as the rest of humanity once did?

It is genuinely difficult to approach critically certain points raised in the book, as they are based on conviction brought about by faith, rather than on reasoning. The "causeries" are more of the type of sermons than lectures; arguments like those on the meaning and significance of the Upanishads can be counterbalanced only by criticism of the author's general attitude.

Whenever the author deviates from his emotional attitude to the problems dealt with in the book, he shows a considerable gift for clear and concise

## PHILOSOPHY

exposition. He tackles difficult problems in a simple and attractive manner which can please the reader. It is, therefore, a pity that his book is more after the manner of propaganda than serious study. To a lesser or greater extent it disregards not only the historical order of literary works, but the development of philosophical facts. Thus the Chāndogya-Upanishad is assigned to 1500 B.C. and the mention of Krishna in it is made to serve as proof for Krishna's historicity.

Siddheswarananda's work is not isolated in its tendency. Quite a few such books have been written in recent years and some, like this one, present a queer mixture of scholarship and fiction. The fiction is accounted for by a deliberate prejudice: it sets out to elevate in our eyes the missionary role of India's religions and philosophies. It follows the pattern of jumping to conclusions, finding easy similarities between Indian and Western philosophers, and juxtaposing incompatible notions.\*

A book like the one under review, however well meant, is not likely to attract the serious philosophically-minded reader by appealing to him with superlatives for all that it offers, or condemnation for all that does not fit into its framework. Indian Philosophy as a means of constructive criticism of modern times could be effective only if its problems were studied on their own merits. Despite good intentions, Siddheswarananda's book has not approached the subject from this angle.

Except for a slight inaccuracy in the alphabetical order, the glossary is well arranged. It might have been useful to indicate the pages beside the meanings of words, as the meanings indicated seem to refer exclusively to particular contexts.

ARNOLD KUNST.

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*Telepathy and Allied Phenomena.* By ROSALIND HEYWOOD. With a section on quantitative experiments by S. G. Soal. (The Society for Psychical Research London 1948. Pp. 30. Price 1s.)

This pamphlet is to be welcomed as a useful introduction to the subject, very readable and giving many of the more striking facts. It comprises twelve sections and a short bibliography. The field covered is that of the evidence for extra-sensory perception, including, for example, telepathy, clairvoyance, veridical hallucination and precognition. Chapter XI on Experimental Telepathy and Clairvoyance is by S. G. Soal, and contains an interesting account of the work of Rhine, Carington, and himself.

In my opinion the pamphlet has some faults which I think it is important to point out as they tend to be common in works on psychical research.

1. Insufficient care in definition and elucidation of terms. Thus the field is indicated on p. 1 as "telepathy and allied phenomena—that is, the power to obtain *knowledge* (my italics) of facts independently of physical means and of rational inference." This will not do because, as Mrs. Heywood herself points out on p. 11, "the percipient cannot be said to *know* the situation of the agent," i.e., the percipient may acquire *beliefs* but he is never in a position to maintain that these are certain beyond all possibility of doubt. Therefore, he never has knowledge in the strict sense of the term. The neutral word, "cognition" would be safer.

2. The use of very doubtful arguments in probability. Mrs. Heywood quotes on p. 8 with apparent approval the curious argument by which Gurney sought to establish that the coincidence of a hallucination with the death of the person concerned occurs about forty-three times more often than would

\* For instance the author finds a close affinity between the concept of ignorance as propounded by Krishna and Spinoza.

## NEW BOOKS

be expected on the hypothesis of chance-connection. Mr. Tyrrell (*Apparitions*, p. 9), has already pointed out the unsatisfactoriness of this argument. In general, I think that psychical research has nothing to gain by the attempt to apply statistical methods in fields where they are unsuitable. It is qualitative evidence which makes the hypothesis of chance so unpalatable in these cases and Mrs. Heywood is on much safer ground when she points this out (p. 9).

3. I am somewhat suspicious of the tendency to connect the phenomena of psychical research too easily with the mystical experience, a tendency which appears on p. 4 and is suggested again on p. 30. As far as one can judge from their accounts, most percipients do not find that their experiences have a mystical flavour. They seem to regard them rather as quite natural, although somewhat unusual, cognitions of mundane events. The evidence does not immediately suggest, as the mystical experience apparently does, a world beyond space and time, but rather peculiar connections within space and time. It is this which gives it the possible practical importance which Mrs. Heywood mentions in her last paragraph.

In a work of this scope there is little room for theoretical discussion, but I should like to commend Mrs. Heywood's shrewd comment on the alleged connection between precognition and determinism (p. 20).

There is one curious misprint. "Mitigate" on p. 12 should surely be "militate."  
MARTHA KNEALE.

*Kantian Studies.* By A. H. SMITH (Oxford University Press 1947. Pp. 193. Price 15s. net.)

I must apologize for the delay in sending in a review of this book. I was out of the country during the summer but this is only partly the reason for delay. The main reasons are first, that I doubt whether the book is capable of being adequately reviewed although it might be the basis of a large commentary, and second, a certain diffidence in expressing the grave doubts that I have, not about the usefulness of studying Kant in the way in which Mr. Smith has obviously studied him, but of writing a book of this nature on the result of the study.

The book comprises five chapters on central points in the Aesthetic and Analytic (excluding some but by no means all of the points raised in the Dialectic) with an added chapter of thirteen pages on Universals and the form of Intuition in Mathematics, six of which are devoted to Kant's views on Mathematics. This last chapter is "in the main a paper read to the Jowett Society at Oxford." The Chapters are entitled successively: Kant's Doctrine on the Relation between the forms of Space and Time and our Consciousness of Objects (pp. 1-12), the Refutations of Idealism (pp. 12-47); the Doctrine of the First Edition Deduction of the Categories (pp. 48-81); the Doctrine of the Second Edition Deduction of the Categories (pp. 82-152), the Antithesis of Phenomena and Noumena (pp. 153-180), plus the short chapter on Mathematics. But in so far as much of the book is concerned with elaborating the thesis that Kant had no solution of the problem as to how different minds can know a common world and that this is partly due to the fact that his thought moved through theories in the First Edition of a subjectivist character which he later came to see were inadequate to an attempted, but unsuccessful, alteration of standpoint in the Second Edition, it is clear that the ground covered is virtually the whole of the *Critique of Pure Reason* with the exception of "The Ideal of Pure Reason." And this is why I doubt the value of the book.

Mr. Smith, in the short account of two hundred pages, deals not only with

## PHILOSOPHY

Kant's changing viewpoints but his neglected and possible viewpoints also. Add to this that the reader is intended to be familiar with Mr. Smith's recent book on *Knowledge* and it will be understood that the book is composed of two hundred pages of extremely difficult reading, some of which depends on doubtful interpretations of Kant's intentions in the text and the rest of Mr. Smith's attempted extrications of Kant from his difficulties and dilemmas. Unfortunately, the author has not only followed Kant in the obscurity of his thought but also in the difficulty of his writing, and the reviewer continually asks himself, "For whom is the book intended?" Not certainly the general reader; nor, I submit, the undergraduate; nor, I fear, many professional philosophers. The book may be of value to the increasingly dwindling number of Kantian scholars but I think that some of these would have preferred a more lengthy commentary.

To come to detail. In the first Chapter, Mr. Smith argues that one important thing that Kant claimed was that his doctrine that Space and Time are *a priori* forms of appearance is the only way to account for the difference between appearance and reality. What is real is an appearance in Space-and-Time-Order. The rest is unreal. But reality is phenomenal, hence both material things and the self are phenomenal and are equal in status. The imaginary is then accounted for by the fact that "its content is apprehended as disjoined from the order of Space and Time." The thesis is then propounded that as Kant has stated the case he finds himself in the position that there is no parity of status between the self and objects because external sense is contained in internal sense in the sense that appearances in external sense are apprehended by conscious acts which are themselves in internal sense. Hence neither Descartes nor Berkeley is refuted because the independent status of objects in external sense is imperilled. Mr. Smith then argues that the Second Edition Refutation of Idealism, which is subjected to a minute exposition and criticism, is designed to meet this very difficulty but fails to do so. Now, whereas the Kantian student ought to welcome a detailed account of the argument in the Second Edition, I doubt whether this exposition will be acclaimed. Mr. Smith moves very easily through what he takes to be the relevant portions of Kant, and these are very many indeed (actually the whole of the *Critique of Pure Reason* preceding this is relevant), and bewilders the reader with quotations, comparisons with Berkeley and Hume, the criticism of Mr. Joseph, and above all, seems to give a most perverse account of Kant's intentions. The account depends on the meaning to be given to the phrase "something permanent in perception." Mr. Smith, after a detailed Analysis of the plausible (or possible) things that might be permanent, thinks that Kant is moving to the view that time is permanent and is external (independent of?) both to the self and the objects which are thought of as existing in it. And he refers to the Analogies in support of his case where Kant bases his arguments on the characteristics of time.

There are some startling observations by the way, namely: p. 21 "that Kant seems in effect to say that Time is the object of external sense," but what is curious is that Mr. Smith does not refer to the very explicit sections in the Postulates of Empirical Thought on the point at issue. Kant writes "when, for instance, we take the pure concepts of relation, we find, firstly, that in order to obtain something *permanent* in intuition corresponding to the doctrine of substance, and so to demonstrate the objective reality of his concepts, we require an intuition in Space (of matter). For space alone is determined as permanent, while time, and therefore everything that is in inner sense is in constant flux" and later, in dealing with alteration, which is incomprehensible without intuition "the intuition required is the intuition of the movement of

a point in space . . . for in order that we may afterwards make inner alterations likewise thinkable we must represent time figuratively as a line . . . the reason for this is that all alteration, if it is to be perceived as alteration, presupposes something permanent in intuition and that in inner sense no permanent intuition is to be met with." B292. This is precisely the argument of the Second Edition Refutation.

Two comments are offered. Kant himself thought, not that he had changed his point of view, but that he had been misunderstood in the First Edition and it is to be noted that the example of the line given above in the Second Edition also occurs in two or three places in the First Edition, notably A33 and A102 and that Kant had motion before his mind all the time, A41. The plea made by Mr. Smith on page 1 that Kant had not foreseen the effect of his views in the Aesthetic, indicated in the Paralogisms, A378, seems to me to force the meaning of the author's "Die wir damals nicht voraussehen konnten," which might well be taken to mean, not that Kant did not foresee, but that the reader could not foresee, because Kant could not explain the whole of his system in the Aesthetic. It is true that Mr. Smith admits that Kant was in difficulties and that he has not merely interpreted Kant but also drawn the implications of his views. But he comes perilously near to suggesting that Kant was not only confused but fumbling in his confusions.

In chapter III, in the discussion on the First Edition Deduction of the Categories, there is a long and detailed discussion on objectivity, including the nature of the "transcendental object." The general conclusion is that Kant does not do full justice to the notion of objectivity present in our thinking in that he wavers between the two views (p. 78) that the notion of an object is that of a complex of presentations or of a category which consciousness ascribes to its presentations and an alternative view, which is held to be the true view, namely that an object is something which determines the system of our presentations. The notion of the transcendental object is admittedly difficult. One of the peculiarities of Mr. Smith's book is that he refers to no other Kantian expositor throughout his work except Mr. Joseph and Valhinger (the latter in a footnote, p. 178). This, in a way, is refreshing as there can be nothing more irritating than scholarship about scholarship, but a reference to a scholar like Professor Kemp Smith and others would, I think, have been helpful at this stage. I am not, however, convinced of the truth of the view expressed on p. 78 "we can only say that the notion that the object is something more for consciousness than a complex of presentations or a category or a group of categories hovers before his mind and is never clearly apprehended in this part of the *Critique*." I am not convinced because Kant, even in the First Edition, could not hold that the object was either a category or a group of categories on the one hand or a complex of presentations on the other. It was both. Kant's writing is inconsistent. It may be that his views are false. But there is a central theme of the *Critique* that must not be missed. It is surely that Kant claims that experience is only possible through a combination of thought and sense and that if we miss out either we have no object. Taking this as Kant's fundamental position the object of experience could never be either a complex of presentations or a group of categories. It must always be these in conjunction. How these function together is the laborious and ingenious doctrine of the *Critique*. Part, at least, of the misunderstanding of Kant is due to the order of presentation in the *Critique* itself where Kant deals with the sensuous *a priori* elements first, then the categorial elements, both in isolation from actual experience and he was bound to make statements which, divorced from his whole philosophy, may lead to misinterpretation. The categories are exempli-

fied in appearances, and an object must be an exemplification in which both play their part. As for the view that an object is a complex of presentations, if this is interpreted literally that "the original datum for consciousness, is the succession of our presentations and nothing more" (p. 80) I cannot see that by the time Kant had reached the stage of writing the *Critique* he could be seriously charged with the interpretation although of course it depends upon what is meant by the word "datum."

In the chapter on Phenomena and Noumena, Mr. Smith raises fundamental points on the function of the *Noumenon* in Kant's philosophy which, according to him, fails in the important respect that Kant does not explain "how that which is known to one mind is known to others also" (Preface). This harmless looking phrase needs exegesis and gets little. Does it, for instance, mean that Kant does not avoid solipsism? I merely throw out a hint. The exegesis itself would need a longish paper. But Mr. Smith decides that the conception of the *Noumenon* does not help Kant in this respect and ultimately seems to decide that the *Noumenon* is otiose in Kant's philosophy. A word seems to be called for about the interpretation of the phrase "Erfahrung überhaupt" which occurs in A111 and of "Erkenntnis überhaupt" in A125. I am not in the least bit certain that there is anything very recondite in these phrases and that they ought not to be interpreted in terms of the schema on possibility and ultimately with the Postulates of Empirical Thought, where Kant uses the phrase "Die Postulate des Empirischen Denkens überhaupt." Kant needs some phrase for all sorts of experience and at any time, actual and possible, and if he analyses my knowledge and if that includes in it knowledge of other bodies, including the bodies of other people, and infers the existence of their minds, then we can dispense altogether with any mystical interpretation of "consciousness in general." If Kant's realism is nonsense then his philosophy is nonsense and we ought to give it up unless we are doing history. But even as history it is something like a scandal that scholars cannot agree on even fundamentals. Non-Kantian scholars like myself are left standing and staring. On the fundamental issue of the *Noumenon* it seems to be necessary to make one point of a general nature. It seems to me important, in the present state of Kantian scholarship, to distinguish clearly what Kant was intending to do from the question whether he fulfilled his intentions, and to distinguish both from the questions whether his intentions were foolish and whether, if he had had other intentions, he could have answered questions that we now ask. Now about some of Kant's intentions there is no room for dubiety. He was trying to explain the presence of necessary and universal elements in our knowledge of objects on the presupposition that objects are given piecemeal. His answer is that this is only possible if the universal and necessary and what is given have some similar status. The similarity of status is that they belong to one consciousness. But there is a further presupposition, namely, provided that both are, in the essential respects in which they combine in knowledge, considered as appearances. In short the *Noumenon* is essential to Kant's purpose. Mr. Smith cavils, and with some point, at Kant's use of the word appearance, reminiscent of Ferrier in the last century and (p. 60) raises the question whether "our consciousness is rendered more intelligible" is to be interpreted as meaning "the intelligibility of the contents of our consciousness" or "the intelligibility of the existence of our consciousness at all." Kant's answer must surely be "both" and the interplay of all three is the critical philosophy. To try to understand the interplay of all three is a first and hard task; to consider its shortcomings is a second and more difficult task; to construct another system by incorporating some features of Kant's philosophy, rejecting others, and adding fresh items, a

## NEW BOOKS

final task which demands considerable intellectual acumen. And this is displayed throughout the whole of this book. Whether the final task can be accomplished without distortion of the first is a matter for debate, but I doubt whether it can be accomplished in the space of two hundred pages. To attempt it with the measure of success accomplished in this book is a *tour de force* which, like the trapeze artist in the circus, leaves the onlooker (in this case the reader) aghast.

There is one special feature of the writing which is most unsatisfactory. The author generally gives page references when he is referring back, but rarely when he is making a forward reference. I have checked no less than sixteen places in the text in which the author takes up a point which he promises to consider later and no reference is given as to where it is to be found. This makes hard reading harder still. I have found misprints as follows: p. 34, l. 33 "this in the sense" should read "this is the sense"; p. 173, l. 11, for "thought" read "though"; p. 187, l. 4 for "was a" read "uses"; p. 79, four lines from the bottom of the page "last chapter" should, I think, read "at the beginning of the present chapter." On pp. 51 and 52, *Reproducibilität* is translated "reproductability." This looks odd, but I do not know whether it is good English or not.

J. N. WRIGHT.

*Mysticism in Religion* By the VERY REV W. R. INGE, K.C.V.O., D.D., F.B.A.  
(London: Hutchinson's University Library. 1948. Pp. 168 12s. 6d. net.)

In a charming and disarming preface Dr. Inge anticipates that his critics will receive yet another book upon Mysticism by him with some impatience. "He has said all this before and said it better." But I think that few candid readers will agree with him, on the evidence of this book, that "it may be doubted whether a very old man ought to write a book, even if he is asked to do so." For not only is his power of conveying his meaning as great as ever, but we have here his reflections upon the bearing of recent thought upon the interpretation of Mysticism. And the fact that the author is not so much writing a series of disquisitions as thinking aloud and inviting his reader to share his thoughts makes his book the more attractive. We want to know how this or that recent comment strikes him, and here we have answers to some of the questions we would like to put to him.

At the same time the book has, one must admit, the inevitable defects of its special quality. It is very repetitive—many of Dr. Inge's quotations are given at least twice (and because they are so pregnant or so pertinent we are glad to meet them more than once)—and there is a good deal of reiteration about the matters expounded. We have in fact a sheaf of essays, often overlapping in content, but all bearing on the philosophical and religious significance of mystical experience, as unfolded in the utterances of the great mystics. Only in the penultimate chapter ("Watchman, what of the Night?") does Dr. Inge give a more general appraisal of the prospect of the type of Christian Mysticism to which he himself firmly holds in a world subjected to such alien stresses and threatened with such far-reaching disintegration. In his preface he has already said: "I am quite sure that Christianity is indestructible, and I do not think that our country is sick unto death, but I have no great confidence in the Churches."

Yet though he holds that it is in Christianity that Mysticism finds its truest and richest meaning for religion, it is not a matter for surprise that it is to Plotinus rather than to any Christian thinker that Dr. Inge still prefers to turn for a philosophy of Mysticism. The spirit of Plotinus irradiates the book, perhaps the last tribute to his teacher of our greatest Neoplatonist



scholar. In particular he finds the teaching of Plotinus helpful in grappling with some of the most crucial difficulties; as a corrective to the wrong sort of mystical "non-attachment," as pointing to a truer view of personal individuality than some (especially Indian) mystics have accepted, and as throwing light upon the meaning of Time and Eternity.

On all these and on much else Dr. Inge's comments are wise and candid and winningly modest. But on the second point I confess to being still in the dark as to his attitude. Sometimes he seems to go to almost Buddhist lengths in repudiating the reality of "the self-conscious ego," while at other times he warns us (rightly I think) of the danger of following the *via negativa* without qualification and the emptiness of the all-engulfing Nirvana. A remark on p. 63 is revealing, I think, upon this point.

"Morality as we know it is always a struggle against evil. When therefore evil is overcome, morality as such has done its work." This is an opinion characteristic of Hegelian Absolutism (at least in its most familiar English brand), as well as, one supposes, of most Eastern Mysticism. But surely it is an error? Does it not involve a confusion between Morality and Justice, which is only a part of Morality though perhaps its most humanly insistent part? But a fellowship of friends, who, as Aristotle says of friends, "have no need of Justice," are not therefore debarred from practising the moral virtues of mutual generosity, considerateness and loyalty. And this may need the perpetuation of personal distinctness although also an increasing transcendence of personal separateness. Otherwise the first and second commandments of Love are reduced to the statement of a sort of fundamental cosmic self-complacency. The doctrine of McTaggart here, with its pluralistic protest against the monistic absolute, is I think helpful: there is only a single passing reference to this philosopher, and in a different connection.

But this may be an unfair cavil. We are grateful to the author for consenting, in his ripe and unsoured old age, to write once again upon the chief theme of his life's study.

JOHN W. HARVEY.

• *The Philosophy of Decadentism. A Study in Existentialism.* By NORBERTO BOBBIO. Translated by David Moore. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1948. Pp. viii. + 60. Price 5s. net.)

Professor Bobbio, who is Professor of the Philosophy of Law at Padua University and Editor of the *Rivista di Filosofia*, maintains, in the book under review, that existentialism is the theoretical expression and affirmation of a certain spiritual attitude which he calls "decadentism." In human history, says the author, we see "a process of liberation from authority, be it theological or human, transcendent or empirical." If at any period this process is carried to its extremest consequences, a spiritual crisis develops, which is "the effect of disordered exuberance and unrestrained vitality." The crisis may be used as a springboard for further progress; but it is also possible for man to accept the crisis, to hug it to himself, to find pleasure in his humiliation, to accept anarchy as a "destiny." This attitude is characteristic of decadentism, which has moved from the field of literature to that of philosophy. The existentialists' delight in anguish, in the contemplation of man's disaster and of nothingness, their incoherence of thought, their amorism, their hatred of the ordinary and the normal, their worship of the singular and the "exception," their retreat from the world of social aims and tasks into that of the self-enclosed individual, are all expressions of existentialism's fundamental decadentism. Existentialist man is "the disillusioned Romantic": whereas romantic man was creative, existentialist man is decadent. In fine,

## NEW BOOKS

existentialism is the philosophy of our time because decadentism is characteristic of the present cultural phase. What Professor Bobbio means by decadentism is perhaps not very much different from what Nietzsche thought of as passive decadence.

Without attempting to embark upon an interpretation of the present phase of human history one can, I think, admit that if one understands decadentism in the sense in which the author understands it there is much in existentialism to support his contention that existentialism is decadent. This would seem to be true especially in the case of Sartre, to whose philosophy the author devotes an appendix. Sartre's evident preoccupation with the morbid and the perverse, his individualism, his professed rejection of objective and universal values, his characterization of man as a "useless passion," can reasonably be diagnosed as symptoms of decadentism in Professor Bobbio's use of the word. Moreover, it can scarcely be denied that the apparent concentration of the German existentialists on death and on nothingness, together with Jaspers' emphasis on singularity, on the "exception," shows an affinity with so-called decadent literature. The self becomes the object of an apparently morbid interest and preoccupation. Professor Bobbio favours a somewhat rhetorical style, which is not usual in English philosophical works; but he develops an interesting point of view and makes out a good case for it.

But, though there is much to be said for Professor Bobbio's interpretation of existentialism, it might be suggested that this interpretation runs a grave danger of over-simplification. I do not want to enter upon the question how far his characterization of the present phase of history as decadent constitutes an over-simplification; but I think that it is too early to classify the existentialist movement as decadentism in philosophy. It is convenient to employ the one word "existentialism" to cover a number of philosophies; but all the same there are different existentialist philosophies, which possess different tonalities and express different outlooks, and the features of existentialism which the author regards as decadent are not equally prominent in all existentialist philosophies. How does Professor Bobbio deal with this fact? Speaking of thinkers like Marcel and Berdyaev he says that "the suggestion of existentialism" to be found in their thought "is sometimes purely a question of tonality or, I would almost say, of *philological* imitation," and states that "spiritualistic existentialism is not genuine existentialism." Accordingly, those who can be linked up with the religious personalists having been excluded from the ranks of the existentialists, Professor Bobbio then goes on to argue that existentialism is incompatible with either religious or secular personalism. Apart from Jaspers' doctrine of "communication," which applies only to the spiritual intercourse of "precious souls," there is no positive and constructive doctrine of society in existentialism: there is only a despairing individualism or a romantic individualism shorn of its illusions, and this antisocial individualism is a symptom of decadentism. Possibly it is; but it is to be noted that the author has already eliminated the personalistic and social aspects of one current of existentialism on the ground that they do not represent genuine existentialism. I think that it would be preferable to say that there are decadent elements (providing that agreement has been reached as to what "decadent" and "decadentism" mean) in existentialism and that these elements appeal to certain people because they find in those elements a theoretical expression for their own emotional states and their hitherto unrationalized outlook. Otherwise one may give the impression that one first defines decadentism, then cuts down a complex philosophical movement to fit the definition, and finally triumphantly discovers that existentialism is a philosophy of decadentism.

## PHILOSOPHY

Professor Bobbio does indeed recognize that an "historical verdict" is not the same thing as "an appraisal of the speculative order," just as a verdict of decadentism in regard to a work of art "does not constitute an aesthetic appraisal"; but when he speaks of existentialism as "a philosophy of ghosts" for "dead men," it is clear that he is passing sentence of condemnation. Yet can the whole of existentialism be condemned as "decadent"? And even if it can, are the metaphysical and moral statements of the individual existentialists true or false, supposing, that is to say, that they possess more than "emotive significance"? That is an important question which cannot be answered simply by means of an "historical verdict." It is also a question to which people would like an answer.      FREDERICK C. COPLESTON, S.J.

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*Existentialism and Humanism* By JEAN-PAUL SARTRE. Translation and Introduction by Philip Mairet. (London: Methuen, 1948. Pp. 70. Price 5s. net.)

Having already discussed M. Sartre's *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme* when reviewing in the pages of *PHILOSOPHY* Mr. Frechtman's translation, published at New York, I shall confine myself on the present occasion to some comments on Mr. Mairet's introduction. One should, however, call attention to the excellence of Mr. Mairet's translation of Sartre's lecture and the discussion which followed it. It is often a puzzle to find satisfactory English equivalents for existentialist terms and phrases; but I think that the translator's renderings of *engagement* as "commitment," of *angoisse* as "anguish" and of *mauvaise foi* as "self-deception" are probably better than any others which have been suggested.

In his introduction Mr. Mairet gives a brief account of the existentialist movement. He is sympathetic, in that he recognizes the vitality of the movement and its relevance to the contemporary situation, though he also draws attention to its ambiguity. Existentialism divides, as Sartre observes, into two main currents, the religious and the atheistic (though it is possible, I think, and perhaps better, to classify the existentialists according to their initial conceptions of philosophy and its aim); and it is notoriously difficult to find a definition which will apply to all the philosophies generally labelled existentialist. However, existentialism represents, in part at least, the protest of "subjectivity" and "inwardness" against the over-emphasis of the objective universal in philosophy, as also in social and political life, and this protest is not only understandable but also of value; yet at the same time the passion for "subjectivity," coupled with an hostility towards "objectivity," which the existentialists show is, in my opinion, exaggerated: it constitutes a serious handicap when it comes to providing intellectually satisfactory answers to problems raised. It is, therefore, impossible to foresee whether existentialism is simply a passing form of a reaction or protest which inevitably tends to recur in the history of philosophy, under one form or another, or whether it will succeed in making a permanent and constructive contribution to philosophy.

I agree with Mr. Mairet that Kierkegaard was "far and away the greatest of existentialists" in his "extraordinary power of establishing intimate personal contact with his reader, of making one feel that what one reads is addressed to one individually." This is only to be expected in view of the fact that Kierkegaard's philosophy was existential thinking, in the sense that it grew out of his own personal and intimate problems and experiences, whereas academic tradition and universalizes in theoretical categories what for Kierke-

## NEW BOOKS

gaard was a living experience. A philosophy of existence, if it is to be a philosophy at all, must be a philosophy *about* existence; it cannot coincide with existence. The transition from Kierkegaard to Jaspers was doubtless inevitable if there was to be any philosophy of existence at all, and it is doubtless true that Kierkegaard, to speak paradoxically, began the process of transition, inasmuch as he did not content himself with simply "existing" but expressed his reflections philosophically; but as far as influence on others is concerned, it is clear that Kierkegaard was the "exister," appealing to one's own unique subjectivity, whereas Jaspers is the professor, addressing himself to the intellect, to human reason in general.

But I cannot agree with Mr. Mairé that Heidegger's philosophy is a "completely secular philosophy," that it is an example of "pitiless atheism." The first volume of *Sein und Zeit* was generally, and not unnaturally, interpreted in this sense, and in a certain broadcast I, the present reviewer, followed this interpretation; but Heidegger himself has made it clear that this is not the right interpretation. He rejects the title of atheist and he recognizes the importance of the problem of God, even if he has not arrived at any definite solution. Mr. Mairé is, however, quite right, I think, in saying that "it is as a philosopher of freedom that M. Sartre's contribution to existentialism is most brilliant and does most honour to the enlightened traditions of his country"; but the extent to which one is willing to admit the justification of Sartre's defence of his philosophy as humanistic depends, of course, on the meaning one attaches to the word "humanism." His philosophy is at any rate anthropocentric.

Two minor points. Jaspers is not, and never has been, a "professed Catholic," which Mr. Mairé, following Sartre, declares him to be. Again, if by saying that Marcel owes much directly to Kierkegaard, Mr. Mairé means to imply that Kierkegaard was for Marcel a primary source of initial inspiration, the statement is inaccurate. Marcel's development has a certain affinity to that of Kierkegaard; but he set out on his philosophical path without having studied Kierkegaard's works.

FREDERICK C. COPLESTON, S.J.

*The Renaissance of the Individual.* By KURT LACHMANN. (Charles Skilton, Ltd., 1947. Pp. xvi + 143 Price 7s. 6d.)

Dr. Lachmann's book is a plea for the restoration to the individual of his rightful status and liberty, primarily through the establishment of a new international law, administered by State-independent judges, which would provide a "Habeas Corpus Act for the unknown citizen of the world." We are faced in modern society with the enslavement of the individual by the autonomous sovereign State, which "claims the right, not only to protect the individual from wrong, but also, if necessary, to inflict wrongs on him with impunity." Even the fundamental rights of men have come to be "entrusted to the care of the State and . . . withheld from—or apportioned to—the individual by the State at its own discretion." There is thus a constant encroachment on the individual's personality, an over-riding of his moral judgments. Men begin to lose "their capacity for differentiating between the dictates of external and inner compulsion"; they come to accept their own enslavement; they need to be rescued not only from external forces but from themselves. The disease to be remedied is thus basically a moral one, and it is Dr. Lachmann's deep conviction of the ethical importance, responsibility and rights of the individual which is the mainspring of his thinking and leads him so urgently to seek a solution. For this ethical basis of the argument we can, I think, have nothing but praise. Dr. Lachmann is stating principles which need to be

## PHILOSOPHY

emphasized again and again. There is, of course, a bad, disruptive type of individualism, but a glance through the book should convince anyone that Dr. Lachmann's is not of this nature.

The author's practical proposals obviously cannot be discussed adequately or pronounced upon in a short space, but they strike me as impressive and deserving of the most serious consideration. Here again the ethical basis is frankly avowed. The proposed new universal law would be based on the ethical principles of justice found in the common conscience of mankind, though its codification, it is insisted, has already been begun, e.g. in the preambles to many modern treaties. Furthermore, the authority of the court should be a purely moral one; it should confine itself to branding as immoral certain acts of governments and affording protection to individuals who have been wronged by them or who need protection in other ways; coercion here would work disruptively, and the appeal to the moral judgments of mankind will in the long run prove more effective. There is space here for only the following comments. Dr. Lachmann's plan, however "idealistic" in one sense it may be, is certainly not Utopian in the bad sense, since he is able to point to recent tendencies in the direction he desires (e.g. the establishment of the Court of International Justice at the Hague), and he does offer us concrete proposals (admittedly in very summary form) for immediate action. Nor can the obvious criticism that a law without coercive sanctions is bound to be ineffective really stand. Dr. Lachmann is perhaps over-confident in saying "it can be stated, with some degree of certainty, that no government will ever run the risk of ignoring judgments given by a world authority"; yet when there is power there is always at least the suspicion of a self-interest which undermines moral authority. Can a moral authority be made to count in politics? Men's sense of justice can of course be distorted, but it can also be appealed to and developed just as lower elements in their nature can; and even governments can be shamed as well as coerced into action. We must certainly guard against a cheap optimism, yet to deny these things is just as unrealistic as to deny the place of any coercion in society at all.

Clearly Dr. Lachmann's case rests on certain important assumptions. Are there any universal principles of justice which all men can at least be brought to recognize if they do not do so already? Can the sentiment whereby governments tend to feel that they will "lose face" if they submit to any authority but their own be replaced by one whereby they will "lose face" if they do *not* so submit? These are large and fundamental questions which again cannot be answered here; but the contention that the removal of certain important issues from the sphere of power politics into the jurisdiction of a body which cannot easily be suspected of partiality would lead to solutions which power politics are incapable of achieving is not one lightly to be dismissed.

I have confined my remarks to the first Part of Dr. Lachmann's book (which was read as a paper to the Grotius Society in 1944 and published separately) because it is the most fundamental. The second and third Parts, however, entitled respectively "Federal Union and the Union of Man" and "Moral Aspects of Economic Justice," are written in the same spirit and are full of thought-provoking comments.

GEORGE E. HUGHES.

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*Language and Society.* By M. M. LEWIS. (Nelson. Pp. vi + 249. 12s. 6d.)

Dr. Lewis is an authority on the psychology of language. In 1936 he published his important work on *Infant Speech*, and in 1942 a book on *Language in School*. In the volume we are considering he has turned his mind

to wider issues: the function of language in society. His thesis, or that part of it which interests the philosopher, is: (1) that societies exist in and through communication—"Without communication there can be no community" (p. 68)—and (2) that if individual mental processes are essentially concerned with the manipulation of symbols, and if social processes are mediated by symbolic communication, then there is no objection to the notion of "group mentality." "If, as Plato says, individual thinking is internal conversation, then it is equally true that group thinking is external conversation" (p. 100).

No one can deny that the behaviour of groups as such presents specific problems to the social psychologist; the conduct of the member can only be understood by reference to the purposes of the group as a whole. Furthermore no one can deny that the climate of opinion in the group operates "coercively," as Durkheim would have it, on the thought of its members. If every member privately holds an opinion, but never reveals it, then there is, with respect to that particular topic, no "group opinion," even if they all think alike, but when they communicate their opinions to one another, so that the opinion becomes public property, then something has happened which calls for comment. "Group conduct" and "group thought" are therefore significant concepts. It is, of course, this unitary or organic feature of groups which has given rise to the hypothesis of a "group mind."

The notion of a mind as an entity which controls behaviour presents difficulties enough when we are dealing with individuals, but when we contemplate an entity to which individual minds are somehow related when they are members of a society, the difficulties become insuperable, and the notion has fallen into disrepute. Dr. Lewis, however, argues that if mentality is regarded as a process, and not as a "thing," then the objections to "group mentality" fall to the ground.

When we ask what Dr. Lewis means by mentality, however, we get no consistent answer. On the one hand we are told that: "All mental behaviour uses symbols of one kind or another" (p. 92), and that: "Mind is behaviour mediated by symbols" (p. 94), while on the other hand we are reminded throughout the book that much mental activity is unconscious, and that symbols only come in when consciousness is achieved. There are, it would appear, two notions of "mind" running side by side: (1) mind as purposive striving, conscious or unconscious, and (2) mind as a symbolizing process.

The most convenient way to deal with Dr. Lewis's contribution will therefore be to consider in turn these two notions, and to add to them what he has to say about the relation of language to what he calls "group orexis."

So far as the general purposive striving is concerned, the argument mainly centres round the phenomena of habituation. In the learning of skills conscious attention and symbolization are required, but once the skills are learnt, then: "In time these habits may come to function unconsciously or subconsciously, but the direction of them may become conscious again at a moment of difficulty" (p. 81). Similarly in group action, what was once a matter of symbolized communication can eventually take place in silent mutual adjustment. When a difficulty presents itself the group-organism turns round upon its own schemata—to use Bartlett's phraseology—and conscious communication supervenes. The parallel is impressive, but it is not only in the field of action that parallels can be found. By communication a group may become conscious of its own history, and aware of its environment. Memory may be implicit in custom, as it is in an individual's habits of long standing, but with language it can become conscious in the form of traditions accepted without question by the group, and later on in the form of written history. By inter-communication, and by this means alone, a group as a whole can become

## PHILOSOPHY

aware of its environment. Each individual member of a fighting unit might be aware of the presence of the enemy, but something new takes place when this awareness leads to communication, and the group as a whole is "aware." Now there can be no question about the importance of all this, but the question does arise: is it convenient to use for these second-order processes terminology which is strictly appropriate to the first-order processes? We have been warned by Professor Ayer to avoid doubling, to avoid speaking of consciousness of symbols as though there were two things, consciousness and symbols, so related that the former is directed on to the latter. There is only awareful symbolizing, and we might take the line that in the individual the symbolizing takes place within one relational system, while in what we have called "second-order" processes the symbolizing proceeds according to another relational system—one which might be expressed by saying that it is interpersonal rather than intra-personal. This, of course, does not take any account of the unconscious purposive guidance which is envisaged as ordering conduct when symbolization has been rendered unnecessary through habituation, and whether this should be called "mental" at all is another question. Dr. Lewis argues persuasively, but one cannot feel comfortable about the application of such terms as "awareness" and "memory" to groups. This may be due to some lingering attachment to the popular notion of "mind," but even when we try to abandon our naive ideas, it still seems true that "group awareness" and "group memory" are different from individual awareness and individual remembering. Furthermore, such terms are certainly more applicable to small face-to-face groups than to large indirect societies, where their application would give the impression of a coherence and unity that does not exist. What Dr. Lewis has shown is that there are second-order processes, at any rate in face-to-face groups, which are so like first-order processes that the language appropriate to the latter is not wholly unmeaningful when applied to the former. And, moreover, he might well ask what other language he could use to bring out his points.

Turning now to the symbolizing process itself—mentality as essentially concerned with the manipulation of symbols, Dr. Lewis emphasizes the fact that groups rest on, and are in a sense constituted by, communication. Leaving aside the question of strict linguistic appropriateness, we can admit that a group may in some important sense be more or less conscious of its purposes in terms of the amount of inter-communication among its members. If we apply this notion to large-scale communities at least three avenues of speculation open up. In the first place we are reminded of the essentially mental character of such groups. As long ago as 1917 Ramsay Muir remarked that: "a nation is a nation because its members passionately and unanimously believe it to be so," but the full implications of this subjective character of groups are seldom appreciated, and we can be grateful to Dr. Lewis for reminding us of them once more. In the second place, if inter-communication is of the essence of community, then when we speak of a nation or an empire as a subject of predicates, or as the performer of actions, we must mean something different when inter-communication is at a minimum from what we mean when it is—as to-day—much more effective. To speak of "a nation," when the idea is only current among a few of its citizens, is to speak of a state of affairs quite different from that in which the idea of nationality is the common property of all.

On this subject Dr. Lewis has much to say. We are living through a "linguistic revolution," as he puts it, in which the means of communication have enormously increased, in which literacy takes on a new significance, and in which we are capable of being conscious of what we are at. In industry and

## NEW BOOKS

in the armed forces new techniques require, and heightened awareness demands, a group consciousness of the purposes and methods in which individual members are called on to participate. This brings us to the third point. It is not only the fact of increased inter-communication, and the increased group consciousness that it implies, that are important, there is also the content symbolized. A society in which such expressions as "inflation," "the second chamber," and "rationing" are common property is a different society from one in which they are not, whether because they are not needed, or—more important—because the mass of the people do not understand them or have never heard of them. Could we but change the content of aspiration current in a community, what might we not achieve? The power of those who control the means of communication takes on a new importance. All this sounds as though Dr. Lewis lays too much emphasis on the cognitive aspect of group inter-symbolization, but this is by no means the case. What he has done is to call attention to the significance of the extent and content of group communication.

The third topic to which he addresses himself is the function of language in polarizing group conation, or "orexis" as he prefers to call it. Here the more general "hormic" notion of mind comes in again. Among primitive peoples group orexis is mediated by the symbolization of dance and ceremonial—a pictorial phase reminiscent of the theory that naked urges find their expression in pictorial form when they emerge from the infantile unconscious. As time goes on, however, with advancing powers of symbolization, group ideals are formulated in words, but when this happens, when the group is conscious of its attitude and motives, discussion begins, and inconsistencies between ideal and performance are noticed. There are motives which cannot be inter-acknowledged, and certain words take on an emotional flavour in which unconscious wish and acknowledged ideology are fused, while the cartoon, like the dream, expresses the unexpressible. Here it will be seen Dr. Lewis applies the psychoanalytic apparatus to group processes. He is not, however, always consistent. The notion of motives which cannot be acknowledged is clear enough, and roughly parallels what appears to go on in individuals, but we are surprised to find him saying on page 186 that what he means when he speaks of the group-unconscious is the case in which there are "facts open to the awareness of individuals and sub-groups but hidden from the consciousness of the group as a group." This is surely quite different from the situation, which he deals with in great detail, in which white Americans disguise the unconscious motives of their dislike of the negro in the form of a desire to preserve "racial purity." Here the psychoanalytic interpretation in terms of repression and distortion is plausible enough, but in the other case we merely have a differential distribution of knowledge. This is happily a very minor slip, because Dr. Lewis is really concerned with unacknowledgable motives, and on this subject he has much of interest to say. *A propos* of political propaganda, for instance, he remarks: "The more that group consciousness is mediated by language, so that the group becomes accustomed to attend to that part of its behaviour that is symbolized in words, the greater the likelihood that behaviour not so symbolized will be left beyond full consciousness" (p. 154). But linguistic symbolization works in two ways: it gives point to group orexis and facilitates integrated action, but it may bring into the open conflicts which otherwise might achieve some kind of non-conscious adjustment. What a pity it often is when certain things are publicly said, and how fatal frankness among friends can be! Undercurrents of conflict, often only of momentary importance, become sharpened and much more formidable when they achieve utterance; they turn, in fact, into something different. It is here, perhaps,



## PHILOSOPHY

that the parallel between individual psychology and group psychology breaks down, but Dr. Lewis does not seem to think so. At any rate, once things are said, once saying things very loud is not only made possible by the new methods of communication, but positively invited, we cannot go back to non-conscious adjustments. Now that we have become language-conscious we must learn to face up to our conflicts in such a way that instead of becoming more acute through the expression that is given them, they reach solution through the will to solve them. This is Dr. Lewis's final consideration, and we are not surprised that he ends with a question-mark: "How is this to be done. . . . How?"

It is not suggested that everything Dr. Lewis says is new, and he himself makes no such claim. The statement of group behaviour in terms of unconscious motivation is common enough, but here Dr. Lewis had broken fresh ground in his comparison of the cartoon with the dream. What is really of first-class importance in the book is not so much the parallels drawn between group processes and individual processes, interesting though they are, as the analysis of the part played by language in social life. By his insistence that societies only exist by virtue of communication, and by linking this up with the "linguistic revolution of the present day" Dr. Lewis has made a notable contribution to sociology and to social psychology. W. J. H. SPROTT.

*An American Utilitarian: Richard Hildreth as a Philosopher.* By Martha M. Pingel. (Columbia University Press. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 196s.) 1948. Pp. xi + 214. 16s.

Hildreth (1807-64) can only be known to British readers through the references in Dorfman's magisterial *The Economic Mind in American Civilization*, or through a concern with the curious, minor, but interesting figure of Orestes Brownson. This ignorance is not very significant, but the excerpts in this book do reveal an early follower of Bentham, unaware of the rigor and the paradox of English Utilitarianism, applying his criteria to a pioneer society. The abolitionism and anti-clericalism which resulted are not of any philosophical account, but of real historical interest for the student of American thought. The excerpts also reveal a descriptive economist, sociologist and politician of some originality and very much in the vry, acute American tradition which culminated in the great figure of Thorstein Veblen.

It is a pity that we are not given the whole of Hildreth's *The Limping Philosopher* which is charming and amusing, instead of the hitherto justly unpublished *Theory of Taste*. Miss Pingel's introduction is not well written and is ill organized. Nevertheless the book goes far to fill a small but real gap in the history of thought. DONALD G. MACRAE.

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- OLIVER L. REISER. *World Philosophy—a Search for Synthesis*. University of Pittsburg Press. 1948. Pp. ix + 127. \$2.50.
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## CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE EDITOR OF *Philosophy*

DEAR SIR,

In Professor G. C. Field's review of my *Companion to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, he suggests as a minor criticism that it might have been possible to give rather more in the way of *verbatim* translation of some of the fragments, and adds:

"The actual words are always more impressive than a paraphrase, however accurate."

With this view I entirely agree; and it is in order to supply those who do not read Greek with this necessary concomitant that I have published also an *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, which is a complete translation of all the fragments in Diels.

Yours faithfully,

KATHLEEN FREEMAN.

Larks' Rise, St. Mellons (Mon.), January 9, 1949.

## NOTICE

### INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY

Since publishing the preliminary notice in the January issue of *Philosophy*, the following further information has been received about the nature of the new post-war editions of the *INTERNATIONAL PHILOSOPHICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY*.

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# INSTITUTE NOTES

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. THE PARMENIDEAN DOGMA. PROFESSOR W. T. STACE . . .	195
II. THE ORGANIC STATE. G. R. G. MURE (Warden of Merion College, Oxford) . . . . .	205
III. BISHOP BUTLER'S VIEW OF CONSCIENCE. D. DAICHES RAPHAEL, M.A., D.Phil. . . . .	219
IV. THE AESTHETIC AND SCIENCE. JOSHUA C. GREGORY . . .	239
V. THE VERB "TO CAUSE." GERALD ABRAHAM, M.A. . . . .	248
VI. DISCUSSION: "HUMAN KNOWLEDGE—ITS SCOPE AND LIMITS," PROFESSOR L. J. RUSSELL. . . . .	253
VII. PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY: PHILOSOPHY IN GERMANY . .	261
VIII. NEW BOOKS . . . . .	266
IX. CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTICES . . . . .	287
X. INSTITUTE NOTES . . . . .	288

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# PHILOSOPHY

## THE JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY

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### THE PARMENIDEAN DOGMA

PROFESSOR W. T. STACE

By the Parmenidean dogma I mean the proposition that "something cannot come out of nothing." If you like to add the other half of the common statement it is that "something cannot become nothing." But in this paper I shall be thinking mainly of the first proposition. I call it the Parmenidean dogma because, although it may have been implicit in much human thought before Parmenides, it was he, so far as I know, who first made it explicit in the form of an abstract metaphysical proposition.

Doubtless it originated in some such common experience as that you cannot get a rabbit out of an empty top-hat, or, since there were no top-hats in the days of Parmenides, whatever experience corresponded thereto. You cannot get blood out of a stone, you cannot take the breeches off a highlander, you cannot take money out of an empty wallet, all these common experiences seem to illustrate the principle. If anything appears suddenly on the scene, apparently from nowhere, you ask: *where did it come from?* It must have been somewhere all the time. It couldn't have come out of nothing. Just as the common experiences of stones which are hard and grey, or leaves which are green and soft, gave rise to the metaphysical concept of substance, so these other common experiences gave rise to the Parmenidean dogma. Thus common-sense truths are rashly erected into universal metaphysical principles of all being. They harden into dogmas. They solidify into prejudices so deep that in a little while men say that anything which contradicts them is "inconceivable." They then become fetters on the human mind prohibiting its advance, till someone breaks through. This was the history of Euclidean geometry, as everyone now knows. It was "inconceivable" that two straight lines should enclose a space, till it was found in Riemannian geometry that they do.



## PHILOSOPHY

First, I should like to illustrate the way in which the Parmenidean dogma has moulded all European thought, from the time of its author down to the present day. There is scarcely a branch of our common thinking, or of science, or of philosophy which does not show its influence. I think that a complete history of the idea, showing how it has interwoven itself with our culture, fashioned and determined our entire attitude to the world, would be a fascinating project. Of course, I cannot undertake anything of that sort here. I will briefly note only a few of its most obvious ramifications.

To begin at the beginning. Everyone knows how Parmenides himself used it, namely, to deny the existence of becoming. Change always involves the arising of something new, something which wasn't there before, something therefore which has come out of nothing. If an object changes from green to red, then the red has come from nowhere, and the green has disappeared into non-existence. And as this contradicts the dogma it cannot have happened. It seems to a modern mind a simple reflection that as a matter of fact things *do* change colour, and that therefore, if this contradicts the dogma, there must be something wrong with the dogma. But this did not occur to Parmenides, nor apparently to Mr. Bradley who uses essentially the same argument to prove that change is unreal.

After Parmenides, everyone knows that his principle determined the course of subsequent pre-Socratic philosophy, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, the Atomists. I will pass over that. The next high light is Aristotle. Everyone knows about that, too. But it is worth a moment's reflection. Aristotle, as we know, believed he had "solved" the problem of change—a problem artificially created by the dogma and otherwise non-existent—by inventing the categories of potentiality and actuality. The rabbit was, by means of these categories, successfully produced out of the top-hat. This was very awkward because we had just looked into the top-hat and seen that the rabbit was not there. There is only one solution. The rabbit was in the hat all the time. But it wasn't an actual rabbit. It was a potential rabbit. That is why we couldn't see it when we looked. Potential rabbits are invisible. In the same way chickens are able to come out of eggs because they were there all the time, potentially; and oak trees are able to come out of acorns because they were there all the time, potentially. You may examine eggs and acorns with the most powerful microscopes, including electron microscopes, and never find chickens or oak trees inside them. But this again is because potential chickens and oak trees are invisible.

We need only reflect on the enormous influence exercised by Aristotle's concept of potentiality on subsequent thought, in Aquinas, through the Middle Ages, and down to the present day, to

## 'THE PARMENIDEAN DOGMA

see how the Parmenidean dogma has fashioned philosophy. It was Parmenides who was responsible for potentiality.

Let us glance now at the influence of the dogma in science. Clearly it produced the scientific maxims of the conservation of matter and the conservation of energy. These ideas are not empirical generalizations. They are simply *a priori* deductions from the dogma. It is true that no one has ever seen a piece of matter created or annihilated. So that the conservation of matter has the basis in experience that it agrees with common observation. It agrees with our observations on rabbits and the breeches of highlanders. This, as I said before, was what must have suggested the dogma in the first place. But it is plain that these observations are an entirely insufficient basis on which to found a universal principle about the nature of matter throughout the universe. It is plain that scientists supposed that matter could neither be created nor destroyed because they supposed it inconceivable that something could come out of nothing or go into nothing.

The same is true of the conservation of energy with one extremely important difference. In this case the principle is not in the least supported by common observation. On the contrary it is flatly contradicted by our experience. If you throw a stone up on to a roof, and it lodges there, you see kinetic energy completely disappearing out of the world, disappearing into nothing. It was "there"—to use the vulgar expression—when the stone was in motion on its upward journey. It ceased to exist when the stone came to rest on the roof. If a week later the wind blows the stone off the roof and it falls to the ground energy appears again, out of nothing. Oddly enough, it is the same quantity of energy which existed when the stone was on its upward journey. What happened to the energy during the week's interval? If you consult *experience*, observation, the answer is that it had gone out of existence altogether. But this does not square with dogma. Therefore the scientist invented the fiction of potential energy—Aristotle's Parmenidean concept—to make it square. Not only is this concept supported by no evidence whatsoever, but it is in this case even flatly self-contradictory. For potential energy simply means energy which is not now energizing. It is non-energetic energy.

In recent physics the separate principles of the conservation of matter and the conservation of energy have apparently disappeared—because it is now said that matter turns into energy and energy into matter. But still following the Parmenidean dogma, they have been replaced by the single principle of the conservation of matter-energy.

The dogma also appears to be responsible for a conception which is universal alike in our common-sense thinking, our science, and our philosophy. This is the concept of form and matter. We suppose

that two quite different things are really, in spite of their difference, the same thing, because one is a different form of the other or because they are both forms of something underlying. Another variant of the same idea is the notion of "aspects." There are supposed to be different aspects of the same thing. An empiricist, though he may admit that such ways of talking are convenient, cannot admit that they possess truth. For if you say that A and B are two forms of one thing, then either this one thing is an underlying substratum which is unempirical; or you must mean that the one thing is A itself or B itself. But if you say that A is a form of something which is by hypothesis different from it, namely B, you are talking nonsense. Red, for instance, cannot be a form of green.

Yet we use this category of form everywhere. Diamond and charcoal, palpably different things, are said to be forms of carbon. Heat, light, and electricity are said to be different forms of energy. How, we may ask, is this the result of the Parmenidean dogma? It is so for the following reason. Empirically what is observed in the cases just mentioned is this. The charcoal disappears into nothing, and the diamond appears from nowhere. The heat disappears out of existence, and the light comes out of nothing. The fact that equivalences can be set up, so that if heat is replaced by light, the light can be again replaced by the original amount of heat, in no way affects this. That is simply part of the regularity and orderliness in the changes of the world. But these observed facts contradict the Parmenidean dogma. Therefore we say that the heat has never gone out of existence, it has existed all the time, but in another form. The category of form in this case does the same work as the category of potentiality in the case of the stone thrown up to the roof. And the one is as much a fiction as the other. And both fictions have been developed in our culture in order to square observed facts with the Parmenidean dogma.

To turn back now from science to philosophy we may briefly note a few of the other major influences of the dogma. First, it is the basis of the view, widely held by various philosophers in different times and countries, that a cause and its effect are identical. We may call this the identity theory of causation. Since, if all effects were completely and literally identical with their causes, there would be no such thing as change in the world—a result which would be much appreciated by Parmenides, but which most of us cannot accept—the identity theorists have to say that the effect is only another "form" of the cause. The Parmenidean origin of the identity theory thus reveals itself at once. It is supposed that the effect must be identical with the cause because otherwise we shall have to admit that something has come to exist in the effect which was not in existence before, i.e. that something has come out of nothing.

## THE PARMENIDEAN DOGMA

A less radical variant of the same theory is that cause and effect, though they may not be identical, must at least be *alike*. This is flatly contradicted by experience since, for example, lightning is almost totally unlike its effect, thunder, one being a visual and the other an auditory phenomenon. Of course, the theory cannot be made even clear in view of the fact that resemblance is a matter of degree, so that it is impossible for the theory to say *how much* resemblance between cause and effect is required. Probably everything in the universe resembles everything else in *some* of its characteristics, however much it may be unlike them in others.

This theory, clearly an offshoot of the Parmenidean dogma, is at the bottom of the baseless objection to Cartesian dualism, that it is "inconceivable" that mind and matter, one spatial, the other non-spatial, could influence one another. Why not? Evidently because they are, on Descartes' account, so very unlike. Thus we see that Parmenides has a finger even in the pie of the body-mind problem.

Another variant of the influence of the dogma on theories of causation is Descartes' statement that an effect cannot contain more "reality" than was contained in its cause. Descartes' question, "For whence could the effect derive its reality, if not from its cause?" is the old question, where did the rabbit come from?

This brings me to the last example I have time to discuss. This is an idea which is, so far as I can see, one of the main props of what is known as absolute idealism. The idea is that *the higher cannot come out of the lower*. Spiritual values, such as beauty and goodness, cannot come out of nothing, and this would be involved if they came out of what is lower than themselves. Therefore they must have always been in existence. They must be eternal. Indeed, on the Parmenidean view everything must be eternal, since nothing can ever come into existence. This is in fact the theory of absolute idealism, since it holds that if anything does come into existence it cannot be real, but is only an appearance. From this point of view absolute idealism is in all its expanse nothing but a vast elaboration of the Parmenidean dogma. But I was talking about its special theory of value. And I return to that. Beauty or goodness may appear to arise out of something lower than themselves. But this is impossible. There must therefore be an eternal and timeless source of values. This, of course, is the Absolute.

You point out that all this contradicts plain facts. Does not the beauty of the rose arise out of the dirt at its roots? Indeed, if you add dung, which from a value point of view is even more contemptible than plain dirt, the beauty of the rose enormously increases. The facts of evolution, too, contradict the statement that the higher cannot come out of the lower. For although I am aware that it is not part of the scientific theory of evolution that man is higher

than an amoeba; and though I am also aware that it is extremely difficult to say exactly what we mean by such terms as higher and lower; yet in spite of this I think we must bold that a man is in some sense higher than an amoeba. Again, are not geniuses notoriously often the children of comparatively ordinary parents?

To all this the idealist answer is that the pre-existent values in the Absolute are invisible like the potential rabbit. For this is what is meant by saying they are transcendental. Transcendental means not phenomenal; and not phenomenal means not visible. Of course, if you give up the *Parmenidean dogma*, the whole of this cloud-land of reveries disappears into thin air.

It is now time to look at the dogma itself and see what is to be said about it. Those who maintain it must hold either that it is an empirical generalization or that it ~~is~~ a necessary truth. In spite of the fact that experience, the common experiences with rabbits and highlanders' breeches, must have originally suggested it, it cannot possibly be an empirical generalization. For as we have seen, observed facts contradict it right and left. Therefore it must be a necessary truth, if it is a truth at all. And I think as a matter of fact it has always been so regarded by its supporters. Parmenides himself must have thought this, since he used it to contradict experience. This is an interesting reflection. For it shows that an idea, even before it has ever been stated in an abstract form by a philosopher, may already have hardened in men's minds into a prejudice so deeply rooted that the philosopher, when he lights upon it, supposes that the opposite of it is "inconceivable," and so mistakes it for an *a priori* proposition. Descartes too evidently regarded his form of it as an *a priori* truth which he could therefore take into his system as an axiom. And I remember to have been astonished to hear a well-known philosopher in a public lecture at Princeton say without a blush that to suppose that something could come out of nothing would be a logical self-contradiction, i.e. that the *Parmenidean dogma* is an analytic truth.

I say "astonished," because any competent student of philosophy ought to know that Hume finally and decisively refuted the view that it is an analytic truth. This was not a mere opinion of Hume's to which another philosopher is entitled to oppose an opposite opinion. It was the definitive settlement of the question.

I am not referring to Hume's famous treatment of the idea of necessary connection. I should not put his view on that question as higher than an opinion, although I happen to agree with it. The question we are discussing has nothing at all to do with necessary connection. I am referring to Section 3 of Part 3 of the *Treatise* entitled "Why a cause is always necessary." Hume's arguments there are entirely independent of his views on necessary connection and

will remain valid even if we reject those views. It is true that Hume does not discuss the proposition "something cannot come out of nothing." What he discusses is the proposition "whatever begins to exist must have a cause of existence." I will call this the causal proposition. I cannot here discuss its exact logical relationship to the Parmenidean dogma, but will say only that if Hume's proofs are valid in regard to the one proposition they are valid in regard to the other. The relevant considerations are identical in the two cases.

Hume produces several refutations of the view that the causal proposition is an analytic truth. I will reproduce only one of these. He points out that we can easily *imagine*—he is using the word in the strict sense of having a mental image of—we can easily imagine something coming into existence without a cause. Thus you can easily imagine a billiard ball suddenly appearing on the table here, literally beginning to be, without any cause, or if you like, coming from nowhere. In fairy tales we often do, on the invitation of the author, imagine such events. *Now it is impossible to have an image of something which is self-contradictory.* For instance, you cannot imagine a round square. Therefore the fact that you can imagine a thing or event proves that it is not self-contradictory. Therefore since you can imagine a thing coming into existence without a cause, this proves that it is not self-contradictory. Hence the causal proposition cannot be an analytic *a priori* truth.

Hume might have pointed out that the impossibility of imagining a self-contradictory thing is only a particular case of the more general truth that you cannot have any kind of direct or immediate experience of a self-contradictory thing. For instance, a round square could not form a part of even a hallucinatory experience, much less of a sense-experience. It is odd that Mr. Bradley did not notice this. If he had, he would not have written his book. For if it were really the case that space, time, motion, etc., are self-contradictory, this would not only prove, as he thought, that they cannot be real; it would prove that they cannot even appear or be experienced in any way. *That they are self-contradictory proves, he thinks, that they are appearances.* What it would actually prove, if it were true, would be that they could not possibly be appearances, not even hallucinatory appearances. This oversight is the more odd in view of the long history of the laws of logic since the time of Aristotle. The law of contradiction has always been regarded as forbidding self-contradictory beings or events in the common world of existence, in what idealists call the phenomenal world, not in the world of transcendental reality. That you cannot both have your cake and eat it is a plain statement about the world of appearances, about phenomena, not about noumena. If Bradley were right in thinking that self-contradictory things can exist in the world of appearance, but not in the world of

reality, then it ought to be possible both to eat your cake and have it—on earth, though not apparently in heaven.

To Hume's proof I will add another of my own. When it is said that a thing is self-contradictory, this is of course elliptical. Things cannot contradict themselves or one another. Only propositions can. So when it is said that a thing is self-contradictory what is meant is that two contradicting propositions follow from the assertion of its existence. Therefore if anyone says that something is self-contradictory we ought always to ask him to set out the two contradicting propositions. It follows that, if a thing or event can be completely described without remainder in a set of propositions none of which contradicts another one, then the thing or event cannot be self-contradictory. Now suppose that a thing or event  $x$  comes into existence out of nothing, passes from non-existence to existence, at time  $t$ . This fact can be exhaustively described in only two propositions, which are (1) that  $x$  did not exist before time  $t$ , and (2) that  $x$  existed after time  $t$ . These propositions do not contradict one another since they refer to different times. If it were said that  $x$  both exists and does not exist at the same time, this would be self-contradictory. But to say that it exists at one time, but not at another, contains no contradiction. Therefore  $x$  coming into existence out of nothing is not self-contradictory.

This argument can be applied to the causal proposition in the following manner. Suppose that  $x$  came into existence at time  $t$  without a cause. This can be completely described in three propositions, namely, (1) that  $x$  did not exist before time  $t$ , (2) that  $x$  existed after time  $t$ , (3) that before time  $t$  there was no event which stood in the causal relation to  $x$ . No one of these three propositions contradicts another one. Therefore the supposition is not self-contradictory.

Thus it is certain that the Parmenidean dogma is not an *a priori* analytic truth. The only remaining possible defence of it is that it is an *a priori* synthetic truth. This view will not find much favour nowadays. But this is not decisive against it since current denials of *a priori* synthetic truths, might be mistaken. What is decisive, however, is the following. If there are any *a priori* synthetic propositions, they must have the character of necessity which must be intuitively apparent. For instance, A. C. Ewing holds that the proposition "a surface cannot be red all over and green all over at the same time" is a synthetic *a priori* truth. I will not discuss whether he is right. But one can see at once that the proposition is at any rate a necessary one. It bears necessity intuitively on its face. The only question, of course, is whether it is analytic or synthetic. Thus if the Parmenidean dogma is an *a priori* synthetic truth, it must have the character of being intuitively necessary. But it does not. No such necessity can be perceived in it. Therefore it is not a synthetic

*a priori* proposition. It is true that the necessity of an *a priori* proposition may not be immediately intuitable. This is the case with advanced propositions in mathematics, which are nevertheless *a priori* truths, though analytic. But in that case their necessity can always be shown by a series of steps the necessity of each of which is immediately intuitable. This means that they can be proved. Now no one has ever suggested that the Parmenidean dogma is of that kind, that it is reached or reachable by a series of demonstrable steps. Obviously the claim is that its necessity is immediately intuitable. But this is simply not the case. If anyone claims that it is, I think it is certain that his case is like that of a man who might say that the proposition "the earth is flat" has for him the character of immediately intuitable necessity. I do not know how to argue with such a person. But it is quite clear that what has happened is that he has mistaken a psychological feeling of certainty, such as is derived from a deep-rooted prejudice, for a logical necessity.

We reach the result that the Parmenidean dogma is baseless. What then? It certainly follows that a vast amount of philosophy based on it must be rejected—I will not go over the list of such philosophies again. It does not follow that some of the ideas based on it may not be useful. Perhaps potential energy may be a useful fiction. It is necessary if the principle of conservation is to be preserved. And that principle, though it cannot claim to be an absolute truth, is doubtless a valuable methodological assumption.

But in general our picture of the world will be changed—and changed evidently in the direction of a more empirical philosophy. We shall not invent hidden substances underlying the changes of things in order to preserve the things from going in and out of existence. We shall not invent a hidden mysterious energy which underlies heat, light, and electricity. We shall say that the principle that they are all "forms" of energy means only that when a given amount of motion disappears and is replaced by a given amount of heat, these are equivalents in the sense that the original amount of motion can be made by suitable means to appear again and displace the heat.

Finally, it seems to me that recent physics supports the view I am taking. An electron is said to jump from one orbit to another, *without traversing the intervening distance*. To use an illustration of Whitehead's, this is as if we should say that an automobile travelling at thirty miles an hour really appears at one milestone, remains there for two minutes, disappears from that point and instantaneously reappears at the next milestone, without travelling the intervening mile, remains for two minutes at that milestone, and so throughout its course. This view of the electron traverses the Parmenidean dogma. For it is merely a matter of language whether we say that



## PHILOSOPHY

the electron which appears in the new orbit is the "same" electron which disappeared from the old orbit or whether we say that the first electron has ceased to exist and a new one has come into existence. The two statements are equivalent but employ different definitions of the word "same." Hence the statement that one electron has ceased to exist and another has been created out of nothing is true. Yet it contradicts the Parmenidean dogma. I do not think this view of the electron in modern physics could have been put forward unless physics had now tacitly given up the Parmenidean dogma.

Again action at a distance must, on our view, be conceived as possible. For there is no contradiction in supposing that a cause happens here and that its effect takes place a million miles away with no intervening chain of events. It may be that it is not necessary for the physicist at present to assert that such a thing ever does take place. He may prefer to stick to his view that action at a distance does not occur. But the rejection of the Parmenidean dogma will mean that his mind is perfectly open to admit action at a distance if ever the evidence should point to it. He will not say that it is "impossible" or "inconceivable," though he may say that so far as he at present knows it does not occur.

In general the moral is: anything whatever can happen—anything except round squares, two twos making five, or other self-contradictions. It is simply a matter of evidence. I have sometimes been asked what is the value of empiricism. Sometimes I am afraid it is used to rule out possibilities. Sometimes it appears as a narrowing influence. But its true function is to free the mind from prejudices, to free us from the bondage of supposing that our prejudices are laws of the universe. Instead of narrowing our view-point, it should open our minds and our imaginations to the possibilities of new paths and hitherto undreamed of progress in knowledge. It should strike off many ancient fetters from our minds.

# THE ORGANIC STATE<sup>1</sup>

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Is the State organic? Does it, or should it, in some way transcend the individual natures of its citizens, so as itself to be an individual more complete and of higher value than the singular individuals who compose it? Is it thus in some sense an organism, and are its citizens in some sense organs of it which gain for themselves a higher value and significance in subserving it?

Or is the singular individual the supreme reality and value in human affairs, and is the State, or ought the State to be, a mere device, an instrument or set of instruments, which men make and use for certain conjoint but not common purposes?

This is the oldest controversy in political philosophy and, I suppose, the most fundamental. The organic theory of the State was maintained against individualist opposition by Plato and Aristotle. In an age of revolt against Aristotle, Hobbes and Locke in this country rejected it; but the British idealists of the nineteenth and early twentieth century upheld it, basing themselves not only on Plato and Aristotle, but also on Rousseau, Fichte, and Hegel. In fact they argued it with such success that it might almost be said to have become orthodox in British philosophy, although an undercurrent of individualist opposition always persisted.

That persisting individualism, descending in England mainly from Locke, was preached in the name of liberalism and democracy; but it signifies a certain vagueness in the term "liberalism" that T. H. Green, at any rate, among the idealists proclaimed himself a liberal.

In the relatively happy and prosperous nineteenth century the dispute was on the whole calmly conducted. There was no desperately acute sense of divided political aims, and no overmastering temptation among political thinkers to impute malicious motives to each other. It was assumed in most quarters that theoretical differences might quite properly exist between men of good will.

But the relation of political philosophy to practice has always been a disputed theoretical question, and the dispute in times of stress is always liable to turn into a violent practical quarrel. Opposition to the organic theory became strong after Germany's bid to dominate Europe in 1914. Her more recent second effort fanned it to violence in Western Europe. To the liberal individualists Mussolini's corporate State and Hitler's Third Reich appeared to damn the organic theory beyond redemption. The idealists were shouted

<sup>1</sup> Lecture given at the Royal Institute of Philosophy, February 27th, 1947.

down. "The organic state" became a term of abuse to be applied either to what its enemies regarded as a product of false theory, or to a certain type of existent state which they felt to be monstrously wicked. The issue was not much clarified by the varying attitudes of political writers to Soviet policy and Marxist doctrine. To-day controversy concerning the nature of the State is so near to common life, so closely bound up with cruel memories and agonizing hopes and fears, that there is danger of its degenerating even in England into a mere ideological brawl.

There is nothing to be said for a eunuch theory of political thinking. No man can reach true political conclusions by cold intellectual insight after setting all emotion aside; by self-mutilation the mind achieves nothing. But straight political thinking does demand a normal, balanced state of the emotional self, and that in modern political writing is often conspicuously absent. In consequence the history of philosophy is often neglected or distorted in the interest of prejudice, and philosophical analysis is perverted to become the instrument of propaganda. For example, many good men, I suppose, will sympathize with the liberal sentiments expressed in Dr. Popper's book, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, but nobody who has seriously studied the works of the more important of those alleged enemies could think Dr. Popper a reliable historian of philosophy. One would say, indeed, that he had flung scholarship to the winds in the pursuit of his thesis, could one be sure that he had had any to fling; but his accounts of Aristotelian and Hegelian doctrine could only be defended from the charge of deliberate caricature on the plea that they are founded on an almost complete ignorance of the originals.

The present confusion of the issue is my only excuse for trying to re-examine calmly some old arguments which seem to me to have become obscured. I shall try only to defend the organic theory in a very general form, and in a form less extreme than that in which some of its supporters have held it, against what appears to me to be prejudice magnified and sharpened by the bitter times in which we live. Moreover, I shall try to defend it only against the liberal-individualistic doctrine, which does still base the State on the consent of its members. I shall say little of theories which base the State on force.

To fulfil even this limited task requires more assumptions than I can here justify. The organic theory implies and depends on a metaphysical context common in its general nature to most of its main advocates. That context differs in Plato and Aristotle; it is not the same in Hegel and in Bradley and Bosanquet. But the political theories of all these thinkers have certain metaphysical presuppositions in common, and I cannot wholly ignore them. If I were defending the opposite theory I should be in less difficulty. The individualist

## THE ORGANIC STATE

political thinkers, among whom count most of the liberals, have on the whole been empiricists, and the empiricist sits loose to metaphysical theory. He believes that to find such truth as the human mind can reach one has not to go far afield beyond the facts confronting one in observation or introspection; or he nowadays denies metaphysics, holding that, save perhaps in mathematics and logic—if he distinguishes them—there is no further field beyond presented fact, and that metaphysics is nonsense.

If I were to start by trying to state a metaphysical background in detail, I should never be done. Rather I shall let it develop itself as the argument seems to require; and I shall get what help I can from Aristotle. He, I think, makes plainer than anybody else the *minimum metaphysic* which the organic theory demands, and the history of philosophy does not suggest that his political theory has grown obsolete with his detailed conception of the physical universe.

There is first a very old metaphysical problem which arises when we ask what we mean by the term "individual." The individualist empirical philosopher commonly gives it the rough common-sense meaning which we all attach to it in everyday life, and is not over-anxious to submit this meaning to criticism. That is why in politics he so often takes for granted a very facile equalitarianism. But we must probe a little deeper. In a philosophical court the proper place for common sense is the dock, or on occasion the witness box, never the bench.

I take it that to whatever is individual we attribute on reflection two characteristics: (a) We think of it as one and not many; i.e. as one among many, an exclusive unit. But (b) we further think of it as one *qua* a unity of differences, a concrete unity; a character which in a sense gives the individual the nature of a universal.

It may at first look to us as if the more important characteristic were (a), the individual's negative exclusion of other individuals. But reflection suggests rather that (b) is the essential characteristic. For surely what makes a man (or anything else) individual is that he is a unique synthesis of certain elements or characteristics, not so much a unit as a unity. Yet as soon as one calls him a *unique* synthesis one finds that one is basing his individuality on (a) as well as on (b). Although concrete unity of differences, a notion which seems to blend individual and universal, appears to be the essential significance of individuality, yet it is hard to conceive this unity as unique except *qua* negatively excluding other individual unities.

This old puzzle may continue to trouble us. Suffice it here to say that on the whole when empirical individualists talk about individuals they are thinking of them as units; whereas when defenders of the organic theory talk of individuals they are thinking rather of unities,

## PHILOSOPHY

and that is to be remembered when the question is raised whether the State is a higher individual than the citizen.

There is a second point with metaphysical implications which must be raised before we can advance. In Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* Menenius Agrippa calls his fable of the belly and the members "a pretty tale." It was an allegory. I take it to be plain, despite occasional misrepresentation of the organic theory by its opponents, first that the State can intelligibly be called an organism only by analogy; and secondly that "by analogy" implies that a certain set of terms at one level is analogically related to a certain set of terms at another level of what is regarded as some sort of developing series of levels. A developing series may be provisionally described as a series in which the second term presupposes the first and is a development, a higher power, so to say, of the first, and the third and subsequent terms relate each in the same way to its predecessor. But the relation of term to term is asymmetrical, for the first term does not presuppose the second term, nor does the second nor any subsequent term presuppose its successor. So, for example, chemical composition does not presuppose life, and life does not presuppose sentience; but sentience does presuppose life, and life does presuppose chemically compounded elements. I call the description provisional not because I hope later to improve on it, but because I think we shall discover that the terms of certain important developing series do not after all stand in a perfectly asymmetrical relation to one another. There is perhaps something in the very nature of development which defies our insight.

However that may be, Plato was clearly regarding the State as not literally but by analogy an organism, when he distinguished the appetitive, the spirited, and the rational elements in the human soul, and gave to his ideal State a class structure analogous to what he believed to be man's psychological make-up; and again when he desiderated that the whole State should feel the joys and sorrows of its several members in a manner analogous to that in which the sentient human organism feels as its own the pains and pleasures also felt in and by its various parts.

The importance of analogy to the organic theory of the State becomes very clear in Aristotle. In holding man to be by nature a social animal, and the State to be prior to the individual by nature (where "by nature" means in an order of being or reality), and again in treating the structure of the State as analogous to the structure of the human soul, Aristotle follows Plato. But Aristotle's developing series, his scale of degrees and phases, is a good deal more elaborate than his master's. As we all know, he charges Plato with skipping intervening levels of human association. The State, he says, is not just a community of individuals: it is a community

of communities. In the family and the village group man enters, or finds himself in, progressively different stages of association, which culminate in the State, the sovereign and inclusive association. Plato, by cutting out the family, or rather by attempting to make his guardians and auxiliaries into a single family, had ignored the natural progressive difference of human association; he had violated the true nature of man and the human community.

This confronts us with a third metaphysical difficulty, one adumbrated in the opening words of this article. What is the meaning here of the term "nature?" What is it that Plato and Aristotle—indeed, political theorists in general—are trying to discover? Is it the nature of States as they are, or the nature of States as they ought to be? That again is an old familiar puzzle, but infinite confusion follows if it is not faced. We must digress to consider it, but if we examine the outline of Aristotle's answer we shall find that we have not strayed far from the main road.

Analogical relation and developing series pervade the entire Aristotelian system. Aristotle sees the universe as a hierarchy descending from God through men, brutes, and plants down to the physical elements and even below them, in stages of what for want of a better word I must call "developedness." These stages form a developing series such that there is analogical relation between one stage and another; but one stage does not temporally pass into another. On the other hand, within each stage of "developedness" in this hierarchy there is temporal development. For, with exceptions here irrelevant, each such stage between God and the indeterminate matter which falls below the physical elements, is a genus of species; and although each genus is articulated into species which Aristotle again on the whole regards as falling into an order of "developedness," yet the singular specimens of each species do develop in time. They develop through a cycle of phases up to the phase in which they exhibit fully their specific form, which in the case of an organism is its specific function, and then down towards their dissolution. The development of an organism through its several stages from embryo up to adult, and then down to old age and death, is the obvious biological inspiration of this theory, and in it lies Aristotle's solution of the problem of "is" and "ought-to-be."

The true nature of the developing specimen is the specific form which it will not exhibit until it is mature, and which it will cease fully to exhibit when it decays. Thus the specific form is not a mere class label but a norm, and the true nature of the sprouting seed or the newborn babe, that in terms alone of which it can be defined, is not what it is now, but what, provided its development proceeds normally, it will be when it matures. Before and after its climax of maturity it is real only in a degree and approximately.

Specimens whose development is arrested so that they never fully embody the specific form, are also in that degree unreal; and at a certain level evil, which is not *mere* defect, can emerge. The specimen, i.e. can develop and yet so embody the form as to be a perversion of it. Such specimens are unreal compared with the normal, though as compared with the defective they have a quasi-positive character.

Thus the contrast of "is" and "will-be" in the developing specimen is a fairly close lower analogue of the contrast between "is" and "ought-to-be;" and the contrast between what the permanently defective specimen is, and what it would be if it could fully embody the specific form, is a yet more obvious analogue. The specific form is, as I have said, a norm, an ideal. In Aristotle's terminology, it is not merely the specimen's formal cause, that in terms alone of which it can be defined; it is also the specimen's final cause, that for the sake of which it develops. The contrast of "is" and "will-be" in the immature specimen, and the contrast of "is" and "would-be" in the defective specimen, of course differ from the contrast of "is" and "ought-to-be," because the growth and decay of the living organism and the permanent defect of some organisms are not due to volition; for most organisms have no will, and even in man his organic growth and decay and his physical defects are independent of his will, save to the limited extent to which he can deliberately assist or hinder the natural process in him, acting when he does so in large measure externally upon it.

Here, then, is Aristotle's answer to the question of the State's true nature, to the problem whether the political philosopher tries to discover what States are or what they ought to be. He denies the disjunction. Only by reference to an ideal to which they approximate can you understand and judge actual States; only by studying actual States can you elicit that ideal criterion in terms of which alone you can understand and judge them. And again, since man is by nature, i.e. ideally and in his true nature, a social animal, it is only by reference to the State, ultimately to an ideal State, that you can understand the nature of actual man; but it is only by studying actual human nature that you can elicit the true nature of the State.

So we return to the main road. For the ground on which Aristotle bases his solution of the problem of "is" and "ought-to-be" turns out to be precisely the ground on which he holds that the State is organic, is the higher development of mere singular individual man into possession of his true nature.

We have discovered also more than Aristotle's solution of a problem in political philosophy. We have stumbled on his answer to the double problem of the *a priori* and the empirical in logic, and

## THE ORGANIC STATE

of fact and value in any concrete philosophy; and we have seen this answer to be bound up with a conception of the universe as a certain sort of hierarchy, a certain sort of scale of reality.

We can now perhaps sum up the minimum of metaphysical pre-supposition which the organic theory of the State entails.

It must first of all assume that we can only understand philosophically the reality we experience in so far as we can grade it in terms of development or "developedness," and that these degrees of development or "developedness" are, at any rate outside the sphere of mathematics and natural science, in a broad sense degrees of value.

Secondly, it must assume that the philosopher, or at any rate the political philosopher, can nowhere reason either purely *a priori* or purely empirically. He cannot divide his subject-matter rigidly into two spheres, the one in which he intuits or thinks out *a priori* principles and criteria of value, the other in which he just investigates the facts. Everywhere he is somehow doing both those things in one act of thought. He can vary the emphasis a good deal, but if he comes to believe that his results in either of these only relatively separate spheres have been reached without the aid of any insight into the other, then he is deceived. He has forgotten that there is always a tinge of the empirical in his ideal criterion and always a touch of ideal interpretation in his facts. In other words, although Aristotle's solution of the problem of "is" and "ought-to-be" is in some sense a circle, nevertheless the circle cannot be broken by impaling oneself firmly on one horn of the dilemma, nor by sitting alternately on each. Yet there remains a residue of paradox in Aristotle's circular solution of the problem. So much indeed I hinted by suggesting that there is perhaps something in the very nature of development which defies human insight.

It is time that we attacked the centre of our subject. The main argument in favour of the organic theory lies, I suppose, in the State's attribute of sovereignty. Equally on a liberal and on an organic theory, any act of State claims the consent, and where necessary the active obedience, of all citizens as such. Yet when the State acts the agent cannot, I think, be any fraction or even the sum total of the adult singular individual citizens as such. For no claim to obedience would logically follow. Take first the extreme case: assume universal suffrage, and a unanimous referendum, with no abstentions, in favour of universal conscription. Here the sovereign agent might be said to have been the sum total of citizens. But if the voters voted as singular individuals, the plebiscite would amount to no more than a mere statement that at the moment of voting everybody favoured conscription. If any voter changed his mind next day, there is no reason but fear of force, which we are not



## PHILOSOPHY

considering, why he should not refuse to serve. If a man is in his real nature just a singular individual and no more, he cannot bind his own will and accept a moral claim on his obedience which shall be valid even if he should change his mind and regret his previous decision. Only if his will is in its true nature an activity common to himself and others, though differentiated in himself and others, can a man even bind himself by a promise to his neighbour, much less accept obligation to obey a law or decree of the State. But if there be a real will common to, but differentiated in, men acting politically, that surely is something individual in a sense more real than the sense in which the singular man is individual: it is individual not *qua* a unit but *qua* a unity. And what can sovereignty be but this? For sovereignty assuredly implies unity, and the sum total of citizens, happening all to vote the same way, is not a unity but a mere aggregate which cannot be exercising sovereign power.

In the case of a majority vote the argument from sovereignty is stronger, or at least more obvious. Unless some real community of will links *all* who vote, what possible claim has the majority on the obedience of the dissenting minority? If the act of State is alleged to be the sovereign act of one or of a few, of an absolute autocrat or of an oligarchy, there is again no claim to obedience—there is indeed no true State—unless there is real community of will between rulers and ruled; i.e. unless in being ruled as opposed to being merely compelled a man is in some measure ruling himself. The most rudimentary self-control is not possible if men are singular individuals possessing no universal nature beyond certain common characteristics which serve as marks to classify them.

The argument here really turns on the nature of freedom. The liberal individualist, regarding individual freedom as the highest value, sees all governmental institutions as instruments for securing and preserving it, and feels that by the organic theory it is most dangerously threatened. He takes the "Don't fence me in" view of freedom. He will concede, as J. S. Mill concedes in the *Essay on Liberty*, that government entails some restriction of liberty, but that, he will allege, is only because men living cheek by jowl may tread on each other's toes, and if they exercised no self-restraint there might in the end be less liberty for all.

One might reply that although governmental institutions, legislative, executive, and judicial, and government services, military and civil, do in different ways serve each one of us as instruments—as, e.g., when we obtain a passport or call in a policeman to protect us—yet (a) we are governed as well as served by these institutions, and (b) to those who are actual operative members of them these institutions are not means and instruments except accidentally: they are the special forms of social life which their members live. But

that reply will perhaps not convince until we raise again the old question of freedom.

It has always proved difficult for a liberal to define freedom without introducing the idea of caprice; difficult even though a liberal thinks of freedom as freedom of conscience. Freedom, so in general runs the liberal-individualist line of thought, is the opposite of compulsion, and an act is free in so far as it proceeds from uncompelled choice. But here lies the difficulty which the liberal, in that sympathy with the oppressed which is the most attractive part of his make-up, so often shirks. If *ex hypothesi* nothing alien, whether another man's conflicting will or an accidental event, compels the free agent, what does in fact determine his choice between the alternatives which choice implies? Clearly something in himself. But what? A passing impulse to which he chooses capriciously to yield? If so, his act is still almost accidentally compelled, though not quite, since something of himself is expressed in it. If, however, what determines the choice of the free agent is something in him, or of him, more than a passing impulse, if it is an habitual attitude of mind and character, then a paradox arises. In this latter case his act is very much more his own than was his yielding to an impulse, because it expresses much more of himself. But the more of himself it expresses the less, surely, is it an act of choice. Choice, it would seem, is excluded not only by external compulsion but also by the internal necessity of a man's own nature. Yet when is an act free if not when it flows from the whole nature of the agent?

Here, then, is the dilemma: (a) A free act appears to involve choice, but (b) acts are free in so far as they express a man's nature, i.e. so far as in them he is self-determining and not capricious.<sup>1</sup> These two characteristics seem both to be essential to freedom, but appear to be present in an action in inverse proportion.

It seems impossible to abandon (b): we must say that an act is free in so far as it flows from the nature of the agent. But we must abandon (b) unless we insist that, as Aristotle saw, the agent's nature is not something which he unambiguously possesses in himself *qua* singular individual. If we deny man's nature to be an ideal lying ahead of him, if we deny that he is in any sense organic to a unity beyond his singular nature, then we reduce him to a rigid unit, an atom to whom membership of any group from the State to the family is merely accidental; we reduce him to something simply not recognizable as a man.

Yet the liberal individualist, resting his case on (a), will probably retort that on the view that true freedom consists in a self-determining universal will the individual has just disappeared without trace. He will say that the obvious facts of conflict have been simply

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the two characteristics of the individual distinguished on p. 207 above.

ignored. He will ask, as has been vainly asked of Rousseau, how, if there be this universal real-will, can a man's particular will clash with it or with the particular wills of other men? Why is there ever any dispute in political theory or practice? Is not this universal will, if it is alleged to be a good will, just an illusion? Is it not rather in fact, when it does exist, a will for evil? And he will point in illustration to the tyrannies, to the Fascist State of Mussolini, the Nazi State of Hitler, the Communist State of Stalin.

I will try to re-state—perhaps even in a sense to modify—the organic theory in order to meet this objection, but I will first consider the appeal to the dictator State, which is not difficult to answer. Nazi Germany was not an organic State.<sup>1</sup> It must not be forgotten that the State can be termed organic only by analogy. Within the Nazi community, striving after world conquest in the spirit of a Nüremberg rally, individual Germans bore no real resemblance to organs of a unity higher and more developed than the singular individual. Blind, undifferentiated mass loyalty to a dictator—mass loyalty, moreover, consciously felt and gloried in as such—is not any sort of synthesis giving the individual fuller scope at a higher level. It merely depresses him to a level below his everyday individuality. The intensity of an emotion is no test of its quality, and this is just the mass emotion of a crowd. The working of such a community is nothing but the personal will of the dictator using individuals as mere instruments. The instrumental functions which they perform are based not on rational consent but on a sort of hypnotically induced fanaticism; and if the patient wakes up and questions his orders, swift removal to a concentration camp makes it evident that as soon as this subrational consent fails the dictator's government rests on naked force.

Yet if the illustration fails the objection remains. I would still maintain that the ideal of a higher unity operates consciously in the social and political life of man. It is certainly not a mere regulative ideal: just because it does operate in conduct it is so far real. On the other hand, it must be conceded that there never has been and never will be full consciousness of such a political unity in the minds of men. For even the State as such is not *fully* real: it is an ideal, like every other human ideal, tinged with the empirical. Its unity depends still always on its being a unit. In other words, it may be conceded that the liberal, although he has hold of the wrong end of the stick, at least holds an end of it. Human affairs make no sense unless political structure is a developing series of levels analogically related. Every level in principle, ideally, transcends and explains its predecessor; is the higher development of its predecessor and "ought" to supersede it, as maturity "ought" to supersede adolescence. But

<sup>1</sup> Nor, incidentally, did the Nazis ever officially claim the authority of Hegel.

## THE ORGANIC STATE

as men actually experience these levels, the higher does not fully transcend and supersede the lower. We live somehow on two—or, indeed, more than two—levels at once. Moreover, and the point is crucial, the lower stage survives not just as a residue betokening failure either of theoretical insight or of will, but as the indispensable complement subserving the stage which "ought" to have superseded it. Thus, if I am right, it looks, as I suggested before, as if the relation between terms of the developing series were after all not perfectly asymmetrical. There seems to be a not fully soluble problem in the nature of development.

That will sound obscure. I will try to illustrate my thesis, starting outside the political sphere and gradually approaching it.

We perceive a physical object, and we understand it. When I say, "That is a house," the hearer knows that at least two distinguishable activities are going on in me. I am perceiving with my senses, and I am judging that an object, which is at least in some measure identical with my perceived object, is a house, a thing which is obviously not a mere content of sense-perception but an object of thought. The hearer will further realize that I looked and perceived in order to judge; for the immediate purpose of judging one's perceived world is to develop it into an intellectual, an understood, world. But in this no man can ever fully succeed. One cannot exhaust sensuous content in thought, fully intellectualize it and understand it. A sensuous residue remains, and remains not as a mere monument to failure, but as an indispensable auxiliary to eke out and complement thinking.

Consider now the problem of thought and its linguistic expression, which is perhaps in the end the same problem. Language is always either more or less sensuous. It develops in us as imagination develops. Thus it precedes and is pre-supposed by thought: we develop through speaking to thinking. But as in the case of perception and judgment, the relation is not just asymmetrical. For language survives modified as the indispensable expression of thought, indispensable not merely for communication, but for the actual completion of our thought. We do not think complete thoughts and then clothe them in words in order to pass them on. Until we have expressed our thought in words we do not know what it is, because until it is expressed it is not complete.

Take next the relation between mere impulse and will, the problem on which we touched in discussing freedom. Will develops on a basis of impulse, or rather perhaps from a germ of impulse. Simple minded thinkers have tried to reduce an act of will to the victory of the strongest among conflicting impulses. Not quite so simple minded thinkers have regarded the essence of will as a power of choice between conflicting impulses. But even the second explanation

ignores the fact that the will is a development of impulse: it is not the act of a subject coming upon the scene as a *deus ex machina* and choosing externally which impulse it will sanction, which it will repress. The impulsive self of conflicting desires is the undeveloped will, and it is the will which explains the impulsive self, not vice versa. But again the relation is not quite asymmetrical. The development of the impulsive self into will is never complete, and as sense on the cognitive side survives to complement understanding, so the impulsive self persists indispensably to complement and subserve the will. No doubt the persisting impulsive self is modified; it differs before and after the will emerges, just as the half articulate language in which we struggle towards thought differs from the *mot juste* in which we successfully complete our thought. But it persists as a self of impulse.

That perhaps lets some light in on the social and political puzzles which vex us into conflict both theoretical and practical. If in pursuit of the ideal you try to force development to the higher level quite intransigently, you defeat your own ends. You reach a lower and not a higher unity of individuals, a lower unity which is not even like that of a healthy biological organism. You get not a harmless community of ants or bees but the perverted, pseudo-organic dictator State. You must not try wholly to sweep away the lower levels, because in human affairs they necessarily survive to complement and subserve the higher. To devote all one's energies and loyalties to the service of the State is a glittering ideal beside which private enterprise, the profit motive, indeed most other motives, can be made to look ever so mean and ugly. But the truth which that ideal embodies is a half-truth only. If in theory or practice you pursue this half-truth as the whole truth, it will develop into disastrous perversion. In theory you will find that by cutting out the lesser intervening loyalties you have cruelly caricatured human nature. In practice, if you succeed in persuading a sufficient number of your fellows to act with you, you will find yourself a slave in the pseudo-organic State—or, which may be morally worse for you, its tyrant.

If, on the other hand, you intransigently pursue the opposite half-truth, you will meet the same disaster by another route. The ironic paradox of our time is the contrast between the actual Soviet State and the Marxian ideal of a classless society in which government has withered away. It is scarcely credible that a rational being should now suppose the former to be a stage on the way to the latter, but to see how the paradox occurs is not hard. The Marxian millennium is a *reductio ad absurdum* of liberalism. It assumes the supreme value of the singular individual as such, conceiving liberty in purely negative terms as freedom from interference. It ignores the lesson of all history that the primary problem of human life is the dis-

## THE ORGANIC STATE

tribution of power and not of wealth, and regards government as a temporary device to be discarded when wealth has been equalized through the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat. But it is literally preposterous to allow economics to dominate politics. The economic level is lower than the political, even though their relation is not completely asymmetrical. The attempt by a community to discard government is as fatal as the abandonment of self-control by an individual. Power, if the problem of distributing it is neglected, inevitably concentrates in the wrong place. That is the origin of tyranny, and tyranny, even if you label it "dictatorship of the proletariat," is not a step towards a society without class or government; two facts which Plato very clearly and simply demonstrated in the *Republic*.

Thus equal ruin threatens whether the problem of distributing power be solved brutally and crudely by State worship or shirked by upholding the equal rights of all singular individuals as such. Yet, though hierarchy be the solution which human nature itself demands, the claim of the lesser loyalties, it must be admitted, is particularly urgent in the modern world. Of course it is clear that these lesser loyalties and interests—private property, family concerns, and so on—may most evilly conflict with loyalty to the State. It is clear, too, as Plato felt so strongly, that the direct service of the State may give a man a blessed negative freedom from the petty cramping strifes and jealousies of the lower and narrower levels of association; every good public servant has probably at some time felt that. But even so the service of the State is not a perfect freedom which can stand alone, however loyally and intelligently men perform it. The lesser loyalties may conflict with the greater, but they have their own peculiar values which, as Aristotle retorted upon Plato, cannot be absorbed without residue in the greater without a gross violation of human nature. The lower levels of association afford more latitude for mere arbitrary choice, but without the survival from a lower level of a *prima facie* irrelevant element of choice, and even caprice, the more real freedom of self-determination will inevitably turn into its opposite. Without an underlying balance of actually operant conflicting interests government becomes tyranny.

I think there is nothing cynical in this view. The lesser loyalties are not purely selfish, because in the decent citizen they are modified; just as impulse complementing and subserving the developed will is modified and differs from raw impulse.

If we extend the political problem from the nation-state to the world—and there seems to be no good reason why the organic theory must assume the nation-state to be in principle the upper limit of political association—the same holds true. That a world state cannot be created as a device seems now to have become sufficiently obvious.

## PHILOSOPHY

If it ever comes to be, it will spring from a universal will as a realization of man's nature fuller than the nation-state, and it will then claim a higher loyalty than the nation-state. But it will not abolish all lesser loyalties. Conceive it as annihilating patriotism, and it becomes as impracticable as Plato's ideal State after the abolition of the family not merely because loyalty to a nation-state would be a necessary stage on the way to loyalty to a world-state, but because without some surviving balance of actually conflicting national interests a world-state would have no stability.

I have done little more than repeat a few old arguments which seem to me nowadays too often forgotten or misrepresented. I hope at least to have removed any excuse for believing that if a man holds this sort of doctrine he must necessarily be a reactionary desiring the return of mankind to closed tribal society, or a servile worshipper of a Prussian state, or indeed any sort of State idolator. If the State be organic in the modified sense I have given the term—I am not in fact particularly enamoured of the word—it follows that the State is much more than a device created by an aggregate of individuals; but it does not follow that any actual shape of it is final, nor that ideally it is a closed society. Even less does it follow that the State, which is concerned with the practical life, can claim any considerable degree of control over the non-practical activities of its citizens. But the function of the artist and the thinker in relation to the State raises problems which, though soluble, I believe, along the same lines, are beyond the scope of this article.

# BISHOP BUTLER'S VIEW OF CONSCIENCE

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IN this article I propose to examine Bishop Butler's view of the nature of moral judgment, the epistemological problem which so greatly exercised some of the British moralists of his age. I have discussed the views of four of them in *The Moral Sense*. The problem seems to have been peculiarly lacking in interest for Butler. This may seem at first sight an odd statement: the moral faculty, or conscience, it would be said, is the chief subject of Butler's moral writings. This is true enough. But although Butler's *description* of the working of conscience is unsurpassed, he gives no clear *definition* of the faculty. That is, he does not clearly consider the question whether the moral faculty can be said to be identical with some faculty usually called by another name, or whether it is *sui generis*.

The fact is that when Butler wrote his *Sermons*, in which his description of conscience is most fully stated, the controversy about sense and reason had not begun. The *Sermons* were published in 1726, a year after the appearance of the first edition of Hutcheson's *Inquiry into Beauty and Virtue*, but they had been written and delivered some years earlier. Shaftesbury was already well known, but the moral sense theory is hardly to be found in his work; the moral sense is with him little more than a name. The *Dissertation on Virtue* was published, together with the *Analogy of Religion*, in 1736, by which time the moral sense controversy was well under way. The first edition of Hutcheson's *Inquiry* came out in 1725, the second in 1726; and the *Illustrations on the Moral Sense*, a reply to objections made by Gilbert Burnet and others in contemporary journals, in 1728. Balguy's attack, in the *Foundation of Moral Goodness*, was published in the same year. Yet even in the *Dissertation*, Butler gives the controversy no more than a passing, and rather contemptuous, notice:

It is manifest great part of common language, and of common behaviour over the world, is formed upon supposition of such a moral faculty; whether called conscience, moral reason, moral sense, or divine reason; whether considered as a sentiment of the understanding, or as a perception of the heart; or, which seems the truth, as including both.<sup>1</sup>

We cannot complain of Butler's apparent contempt for this sort of question. His concern was to show men that they have a moral faculty which tells them their duties, not to inquire into the speculative question whether the operation of this faculty is more akin to

<sup>1</sup> Gladstone's edition (the smaller one of 1897) of *Butler's Works*, Vol. I, p. 328.



that of reason or of sense. It should be remembered that when Richard Price attacks the moral sense theory, he has Hume in mind as much as Hutcheson. Hutcheson's theory by itself did not seem so dreadful or repugnant to common sense, until Hume produced from it what appeared to be shocking paradoxes. Butler's work was finished before the *Treatise of Human Nature* "fell dead-born from the press." Butler was still baunted by the man of Malmesbury. Hobbes, not Hume, was the opponent he strove to lay low. Doubtless Butler's feelings contained some uneasiness when Hume sent him a copy of the *Treatise*<sup>1</sup> and when he found himself mentioned, in a footnote to the Introduction, in company with Mandeville as among "some late philosophers in England" whom Hume professed to follow. But his work was done. It was left to others to cry down the *enfant terrible* from Scotland.

Nevertheless, although Butler does not deal directly with the epistemological question, it should be possible to obtain indirectly from what he says an implied view on it. The attempt to do this will involve trying to fit a consistent frame on the statements of one who must necessarily be, from the circumstances and different occasions for which he wrote, a somewhat inconsistent writer. This procedure may be high-handed, but it seems to me worth while since it produces a theory of some complexity which is of distinct interest.

Butler holds that there are two methods of conducting moral philosophy, the *a priori* and the empirical. The first attempts to deduce the existence of obligations from axiomatic premises; the second considers what the nature of man in fact is, and infers from that what is his function, for what purpose he is on the earth. Both methods are legitimate, thinks Butler, and from both the same course of action is to be deduced. He himself prefers to follow the second method simply because it seems the more likely to appeal to ordinary men. In the Preface to the *Sermons*, annexed to them on the publication of the second edition, he says:

There are two ways in which the subject of morals may be treated. One begins from inquiring into the abstract relations of things: the other from a matter of fact, namely, what the particular nature of man is, its several parts, their economy or constitution; from whence it proceeds to determine what course of life it is, which is correspondent to this whole nature. In the former method the conclusion is expressed thus, that vice is contrary to the nature and reason of things: in the latter, that it is a violation or breaking in upon our own nature. Thus they both lead us to the same thing, our obligations to the practice of virtue; and thus they exceedingly strengthen and enforce each other. The first seems the most direct formal proof, and in some respects the least liable to cavil and dispute: the latter is in a peculiar manner adapted to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Letters of David Hume*, ed. Greig, I, 27. I owe my knowledge of the relations between Hume and Butler to Mr. E. C. Mossner's book, *Bishop Butler and the Age of Reason*, pp. 156 ff.

## BISHOP BUTLER'S VIEW OF CONSCIENCE

satisfy a fair mind: and is more easily applicable to the several particular relations and circumstances in life.

The following Discourses proceed chiefly in this latter method.<sup>1</sup>

Using the empirical method Butler finds that there are in man particular passions and affections, the principles of cool self-love and benevolence, and conscience. The latter is usually called "a principle of reflection," but it is at times loosely referred to by any of several names. In Sermon X, conscience is called "our understanding, and sense of good and evil,"<sup>2</sup> where the first "and," as often in Butler when joining two names, clearly means "or." We may compare the statement "Our sense and discernment of actions as morally good and evil, implies in it a sense or discernment of them as of good or ill desert,"<sup>3</sup> and the phrases "our moral understanding and moral sense"<sup>4</sup> and "the sense or perception of good and ill desert,"<sup>5</sup> in all of which the word "sense" is used as a synonym for the words "discernment," "understanding," and "perception."

This of course does not in itself imply that Butler holds what can strictly be called a moral sense theory. The expression "moral sense" has not yet come to be known as the characteristic of a peculiar moral theory derived from empiricism. Butler uses the word "sense" to mean no more than perception in general. Like Samuel Clarke,<sup>6</sup> he compares moral judgment to perceiving by means of the external senses, without implying that such judgment is therefore subjective.

Now obligations of virtue shown, and motives to the practice of it enforced, from a review of the nature of man, are to be considered as an appeal to each particular person's heart and natural conscience: as the external senses are appealed to for the proof of things cognizable by them. Since then our inward feelings, and the perceptions we receive from our external senses, are equally real; to argue from the former to life and conduct is as little hable to exception, as to argue from the latter to absolute speculative truth.<sup>7</sup>

Yet Butler's conscience is, in a way, a moral sense; though he gives a much clearer account of it than does Hutcheson, stating the important differences, as well as the similarity, between it and sense proper. The passage quoted above seems to imply a sort of representative theory of morals as of perception. I think we must in fact attribute such a view to Butler, though he himself was not explicitly aware of holding it. Just as what we perceive by sense is a sign of the real natures of physical objects, so the dictates of conscience are signs of what is really right. In each case that which is indirectly signified by sense or conscience may be apprehended by speculative

<sup>1</sup> Gladstone, II, 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Dissertation on Virtue* (Gladstone, I, 329-30, but printing "or" for "and").

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* (Gladstone, I, 334).

<sup>4</sup> *Analogy*, Part I, ch. vi (Gladstone, I, 124).

<sup>5</sup> E.g. Selby-Bigge, *British Moralists*, Vol. II, p. 10, pp. 31-2, and elsewhere.

<sup>7</sup> Sermon II (Gladstone, II, 46).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

reason. The secondary qualities perceived by sense, viz. colours, sounds, apparent shapes, etc., are signs of, and legitimate evidence for the existence of, primary qualities, e.g. real shape and causal powers, which we know by reason to belong necessarily to physical objects. The approbations of what Butler calls conscience are signs of, and legitimate evidence for, the will of God, which we know by reason to be necessarily determined by objective right. There are of course differences between the dictates of conscience and the perceptions of sense; e.g. divergence of moral judgment is not alleged by Butler to be due to *bodily* differences. But in principle he represents the two as similar.

I must now try to justify this interpretation of Butler, according to which the perceptions of conscience are, as it were, the perceptions of secondary qualities. Again I must emphasize that I do not for a moment think Butler had explicitly in mind a comparison as elaborate as that stated here, nor that he would consent to use the metaphor of *secondary qualities*: I simply maintain that the comparison follows from what he says.

In Sermon II, Butler states that the constitution of man is a sign of the purpose for which God has created him:

*If the real nature of any creature leads him and is adapted to such and such purposes only, or more than to any other; this is a reason to believe the Author of that nature intended it for those purposes.*<sup>1</sup>

Butler more than once compares the constitution of man's soul to the constitution of a state. Conscience, he says, differs from other principles of the mind in having authority while they have strength.

All this is no more than the distinction, which every body is acquainted with, between *mere power* and *authority*: only instead of being intended to express the difference between what is possible, and what is lawful in civil government; here it has been shown applicable to the several principles in the mind of man.<sup>2</sup>

Butler seems to think of God as analogous to the legislator or sovereign, and conscience to the governor or executive, of a state. "This faculty was placed within to be our proper governor."<sup>3</sup> To say that some element in the state has authority as opposed to power, is to say that it ought to rule. And to speak of the authority of conscience as opposed to the strength of desires, is to say that conscience ought to rule. Conscience,

being in nature supreme, . . . ought to preside over and govern all the rest.<sup>4</sup>

To preside and govern, from the very economy and constitution of man, belongs to it. Had it strength, as it has right; had it power, as it has manifest authority; it would absolutely govern the world.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gladstone, II, 44.  
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* (Gladstone, II, 45).

<sup>3</sup> Sermon II (Gladstone, II, 55).  
<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* (Gladstone, II, 55).

## BISHOP BUTLER'S VIEW OF CONSCIENCE

Butler appears to imply that saying a governor or executive ought to rule, is saying that if the governor or executive rules the purpose of the legislator or sovereign will be fulfilled; and saying conscience ought to rule, is saying that if conscience rules the purpose of the framer of the human constitution will be fulfilled. We learn the purpose of God from the sign of authority he has given to conscience.

The due and proper use of any natural faculty or power, is to be judged of by the end and design for which it was given us.<sup>1</sup>

Butler is willing to allow for the sake of argument that God's purpose may in fact be utilitarian. But since we cannot see the consequences of actions to the extent he can, we do not know what actions will really produce the greatest happiness for mankind. Therefore God has implanted in us the faculty of conscience, whose approbations are signs of the fact that God knows the actions approved by conscience to be the most felicitous possible. The immediate approbations of conscience stand, therefore, in a similar relation to the purpose of God as do the perceptions of secondary qualities to primary qualities.

Though the good of the creation be the only end of the Author of it, yet he may have laid us under particular obligations, which we may discern and feel ourselves under, quite distinct from a perception, that the observance or violation of them is for the happiness or misery of our fellow-creatures. And this is in fact the case. For there are certain dispositions of mind, and certain actions, which are in themselves approved or disapproved by mankind, abstracted from the consideration of their tendency to the happiness or misery of the world; approved or disapproved by reflection, by that principle within, which is the guide of life, the judge of right and wrong.<sup>2</sup>

The happiness of the world is the concern of him, who is the Lord and the Proprietor of it: nor do we know what we are about, when we endeavour to promote the good of mankind in any ways, but those which he has directed, that is indeed in all ways not contrary to veracity and justice.<sup>3</sup>

A passage from the *Analogy of Religion* shows that the mark of authority which conscience bears is to be interpreted, according to Butler, as showing us not merely the command of God, but also his promise and threat of what he will do if we obey or disobey the command which he indirectly gives us through the approving and disapproving faculty he has planted within us.

It is a matter of fact . . . that he hath given us a moral faculty, by which we distinguish between actions, and approve some as virtuous and of good desert, and disapprove others as vicious and of ill desert. Now this moral discernment implies, in the notion of it, a rule of action, and a rule of a very peculiar kind: for it carries in it authority and a right of direction; authority

<sup>1</sup> Sermon IV (Gladstone, II, 71).

<sup>2</sup> Sermon XII, footnote (Gladstone, II, 190).

<sup>3</sup> *Dissertation on Virtue* (Gladstone, I, 337).

in such a sense, as that we cannot depart from it without being self-condemned. And that the dictates of this moral faculty, which are by nature a rule to us, are moreover the laws of God, laws in a sense including sanctions; may be thus proved. Consciousness of a rule or guide of action, in creatures who are capable of considering it as given them by their Maker, not only raises immediately a sense of duty, but also a sense of security in following it, and of danger in deviating from it. A direction of the Author of nature, given to creatures capable of looking upon it as such, is plainly a command from him: and a command from him necessarily includes in it, at least, an implicit promise in case of obedience, or threatening in case of disobedience. But then the sense or perception of good and ill desert, which is contained in the moral discernment, renders the sanction explicit, and makes it appear, as one may say, expressed. For since his method of government is to reward and punish actions, his having annexed to some actions an inseparable sense of good desert, and to others of ill, this surely amounts to declaring, upon whom his punishments shall be inflicted, and his rewards be bestowed.<sup>1</sup>

He goes on a little later to say:

The conclusion, that God will finally reward the righteous and punish the wicked, is not here drawn, from its appearing to us fit that *he should*; but from its appearing, that he has told us, *he will*. And this he hath certainly told us, in the promise and threatening, which it hath been observed the notion of a command implies, and the sense of good and ill desert which he has given us, more distinctly expresses.<sup>2</sup>

This passage, I think, makes it quite clear what Butler means when he says in Sermon II that conscience

pronounces determinately some actions to be in themselves just, right, good; others to be in themselves evil, wrong, unjust; which, without being consulted, without being advised with, magisterially exerts itself, and approves or condemns him the doer of them accordingly: and which, if not forcibly stopped, naturally and always of course goes on to anticipate a higher and more effectual sentence, which shall hereafter second and affirm its own.<sup>3</sup>

Conscience, Butler implies, has two functions; it may perceive (1) that a particular action is right, and (2) that the doing of that action is of good desert and the omission of it of ill desert. These two "secondary qualities," if they may be so called, are signs of two facts, which they "make to appear expressed," just as secondary qualities given in sense perception are the signs of, or make to appear to us, the primary qualities of physical objects. The two facts corresponding to primary qualities are (1) that God wills or commands that we do this action, and (2) that God will reward us if we do it and punish us if we do not.

Butler does not hold that "right" and "of good desert" mean this. He seems to hold that they are simple ideas. Nor does his view imply disagreement with the rationalists. He holds that there is also a

<sup>1</sup> *Analogy*, Part I, ch. vi (Gladstone, I, 123-4).  
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* (Gladstone, I, 125).

<sup>3</sup> Gladstone, II, 31.

## BISHOP BUTLER'S VIEW OF CONSCIENCE

characteristic of "fitness,"<sup>1</sup> but this cannot be the same as the characteristic of "rightness," for it is perceived by "speculative reason" while rightness is perceived by the "moral understanding" or conscience. Furthermore, Butler agrees with the rationalists that fitness cannot be dependent on the will of God, but that the reverse must be true. We have seen that in the *Analogy*

the conclusion, that God will finally reward the righteous and punish the wicked, is not here drawn, from its appearing to us fit that *he should*; but from its appearing, that he has told us, *he will*.

But in a footnote to the word "fit" in this sentence, he says:

However, I am far from intending to deny, that the will of God is determined, by what is fit, by the right and reason of the case; though one chooses to decline matters of such abstract speculation, and to speak with caution when one does speak of them. But if it be intelligible to say, that *it is fit and reasonable for every one to consult his own happiness*, then *fitness of action, or the right and reason of the case*, is an intelligible manner of speaking. And it seems as inconceivable, to suppose God to approve one course of action, or one end, preferably to another, which yet his acting at all from design implies that he does, without supposing somewhat prior in that end, to be the ground of the preference; as to suppose him to discern an abstract proposition to be true, without supposing somewhat prior in it, to be the ground of the discernment. It doth not therefore appear, that moral right is any more relative to perception, than abstract truth is; or that it is any more improper, to speak of the fitness and rightness of actions and ends, as founded in the nature of things, than to speak of abstract truth, as thus founded.<sup>2</sup>

Again, towards the end of the *Analogy*, Butler says he has

omitted a thing of the utmost importance which I do believe, the moral fitness and unfitness of actions, prior to all will whatever; which I apprehend as certainly to determine the divine conduct, as speculative truth and falsehood necessarily determine the divine judgment.<sup>3</sup>

What has now happened to Butler's concession that God's will may be determined by utilitarian considerations?<sup>4</sup> We may answer, if we wish (perhaps wrongly) to make him consistent on all points, that Butler is inclined to take the view of an intuitionistic Utilitarian like Sidgwick. He might say, I suggest, that so far as we can tell there is only one thing that is ultimately fitting, namely the production of as much happiness as possible. Thus God's will can both be said to be determined by fitness, and be said to be determined by the production of the greatest possible amount of happiness. If this

<sup>1</sup> Butler does not consistently distinguish the two characteristics of "rightness" and "fitness" by retaining each of these words exclusively for each of them. He sometimes calls the second "what is right and reasonable as such." Clearly he was not aware that his statements in general necessitate that they are different characteristics. It is perhaps a mistake to try to obtain a completely consistent view from Butler; but if we do attempt this (and I think it is worth attempting), then we must, I believe, say that the view I suggest is implied by most of what Butler says on this topic.

<sup>2</sup> Part II, ch. viii (Gladstone, I, 300).

<sup>3</sup> Gladstone, I, 125.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. p. 223, above.

suggestion were correct, Butler would after all be, in one sense, a Utilitarian. *Conscience*, Butler certainly holds, often perceives actions to be right regardless of their consequences. But conscience and its perception of right are only signs of morality proper. The ultimate moral characteristic is fitness, the substance, as it were, on which the primary quality, God's will, depends, this in turn generating the secondary quality of rightness perceived by conscience. Butler seems inclined to think that the production of the maximum possible happiness may well be the sole thing that is fitting in this ultimate sense. If we care to parody Kant, we might call him an empirical Intuitionist but a transcendental Utilitarian.<sup>1</sup>

In this way Butler joins the Utilitarianism of Hutcheson with the "fitness" of Clarke, and gets the best of both worlds. Equally, I wish to suggest, he joins the moral sense theory of Hutcheson, or something like it, with the rationalists' view of the moral faculty.<sup>2</sup> Butler holds that there are two faculties which may judge of morals. Reason may perceive the fitness of things and deduce our duties from it; conscience perceives the rightness of particular actions, a sort of secondary quality given by an implanted faculty analogous to, though in an important respect different from, sense. And this duality of treatment, typical of Butler's spirit of compromise,<sup>3</sup> bears out his initial statement, quoted earlier,<sup>4</sup> that the *a priori* and the empirical methods of inquiring into morals "both lead us to the same thing."

If Butler really holds this double-aspect theory,<sup>5</sup> as I suggest, why has it not been observed by his modern commentators? Partly, I think, because they tend to neglect the *Analogy* (which after all we must take to represent Butler's maturest thought), and partly because he so often speaks of conscience as "reason" or "reflection." But Butler distinguishes this from what he calls "speculative reason," and it is by means of speculative reason, according to him, that we perceive the fitness and unfitness of actions. In the *Analogy* men are said to be . . .

<sup>1</sup> This tag could be applied to Sidgwick too. Sidgwick agrees that plain men use the intuitionist method of determining their duties, but holds that the only fully reasonable and fully consistent method is that of Utilitarianism. Some critics of Sidgwick miss the mark by failing to see this important aspect of his work. Sidgwick himself protests against the misunderstanding in the Preface to the Second Edition (7th ed., p. x), yet it still continues: I have heard more than one philosopher speak of Sidgwick as if he were a hedonistic Utilitarian *simpliciter*, and criticize him, as one would criticize Bentham, by referring to the non-utilitarian judgments of the plain man.

<sup>2</sup> Butler's combination of the two views is not so very different from the modified combination which I have ventured to suggest in Chap. VI of *The Moral Sense*.

<sup>3</sup> When among angels. To Hobbes he gives no quarter.

<sup>4</sup> Some evidence for my interpretation of Butler is perhaps to be found in the views of Shaftesbury, whom Butler obviously admired and to whom he owed the notion of morality as linked up with the notion of an internally related system. Shaftesbury appears to hold (1) that we perceive moral attributes by a moral sense, and (2) that there are nevertheless objective moral characteristics antecedent even to God, which are "eternal and immutable" (the phrase obviously comes from the rationalists, though probably not from Cudworth himself, whose book was not published until 1731 many years after his death).

## BISHOP BUTLER'S VIEW OF CONSCIENCE

endued . . . with moral understanding, as well including a practical sense of virtue, as a speculative perception of it.<sup>1</sup>

This distinction is illustrated a little later, when Butler says that actual and constant experience of the facility with which human nature can be tempted away from virtue

bath a tendency to give us a practical sense of things, very different from a mere speculative knowledge that we are liable to vice, and capable of misery.<sup>2</sup>

The speculative knowledge presumably would be the *a priori* inference that free-will implies the possibility of vice. In the next chapter Butler distinguishes between "speculative and practical faculties of perception." The former is identified with "speculative reason," the latter with "moral understanding."<sup>3</sup>

Conscience is an immediate faculty of perception which "any plain honest man" has to tell him what is right, without referring to a criterion.

The inquiries which have been made by men of leisure, after some general rule, the conformity to, or disagreement from which, should denominate our actions good or evil, are in many respects of great service. Yet let any plain honest man, before he engages in any course of action, ask himself, Is this I am going about right, or is it wrong? Is it good, or is it evil? I do not in the least doubt, but that this question would be answered agreeably to truth and virtue, by almost any fair man in almost any circumstances.<sup>4</sup>

But the "plain honest man" is only able to do this because God has given him a conscience which in fact, though he does not know it, does judge "agreeably to truth and virtue." Even so, I rather fancy there are some situations in which the "plain honest man" does not find it so easy as Butler would have us believe, and must have recourse to "speculative reason" and become, instead of a "plain honest man," a "man of leisure." Butler agrees that there is an "appearance . . . of some small diversity amongst mankind with respect to this faculty, with respect to their natural sense of moral good and evil."<sup>5</sup> But since a similar diversity exists concerning the deliverances of the external senses, "to argue from the former to life and conduct is as little liable to exception, as to argue from the latter to absolute speculative truth."<sup>6</sup> Butler admits that conscience is "to a certain degree liable to greater mistakes than" sense,<sup>7</sup> but thinks this does not matter. The two give equal evidence of what is really true.

At the end of the *Analogy*, Butler distinguishes between truths which are both necessary and appear to us as matters of fact, and truths which are only matters of fact. I suppose Butler would say

<sup>1</sup> Part I, ch. v (Gladstone, I, 102).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. vi (Gladstone, I, 125).

<sup>3</sup> Sermon II (Gladstone, II, 45).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* (Gladstone, II, 46).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* (Gladstone, I, 106).

<sup>6</sup> Sermon III (Gladstone, II, 60).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* (Gladstone, II, 45-6).



facts about primary qualities fall into the first class, and facts about secondary qualities into the second. Thus, that bodies are extended is both a necessary truth and also appears to us as a matter of fact; that a body is coloured only appears to sight as a matter of fact, and is not necessarily true but merely the sign of a necessary truth, viz. that bodies have certain causal powers. Similarly in the sphere of morals, that the Divine will is determined by fitness is a necessary truth and also appears to us as a matter of fact; that a certain particular action is right only appears to conscience as a matter of fact, and is not necessarily so but is a sign of the Divine will, which is necessarily determined by fitness.

That the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones, is an abstract truth; but that they appear so to our mind, is only a matter of fact. . . . So likewise, that there is, in the nature of things, an original standard of right and wrong in actions, independent upon all will, but which unalterably determines the will of God, to exercise that moral government over the world, which religion teaches, i.e. finally and upon the whole to reward and punish men respectively as they act right or wrong; this assertion contains an abstract truth, as well as a matter of fact. But suppose, in the present state, every man, without exception, was rewarded and punished, in exact proportion as he followed or transgressed that sense of right and wrong, which God has implanted in the nature of every man; this would not be at all an abstract truth, but only a matter of fact. . . .

And thus, God having given mankind a moral faculty, the object of which is actions, and which naturally approves some actions as right, and of good desert, and condemns others as wrong, and of ill desert; and he will, finally and upon the whole, reward the former and punish the latter, is not an assertion of an abstract truth, but of what is as mere a fact, as his doing so at present would be.\*

According to Butler, therefore, a man may discover his duty in either of two ways. First, he may discern by speculative reason the necessary truth that actions of a certain kind, e.g. actions which promote happiness, are fit to be done, and believing that a particular action will promote happiness, he observes it to be an instance of the necessary truth. He may further discern the additional necessary truth that actions which are done because they are discerned to be fitting or because they are approved by conscience, deserve reward, i.e. are fit to be rewarded. Or secondly, he may simply have recourse to the faculty of "conscience," "moral understanding," or "moral sense," which God has implanted in him, and perceive that it approves and commands the doing of an action, and promises reward for the doing of it and threatens punishment for its omission.

What are we to say of this view? It is of course perfectly true that "any plain honest man" does not deduce the rightness of an action from a general rule which he perceives to be necessarily true. He

\* *Analogy*, Part II, ch. viii (Gladstone, I, 301-2).

## BISHOP BUTLER'S VIEW OF CONSCIENCE

judges immediately that an action is right without reading it off from a principle. Furthermore, I suppose it is true that many people, if asked what it is of which conscience is a sign, would reply "the will of God." But surely the "plain honest man" is, in that case, not exercising *moral* judgment at all, but the *positive* judgment that actions of a certain sort are commanded by God—though if his theology is a moral theology, as most theologies are, he does of course *imply* an awareness of moral principles.

Let us first try to find out what is the "secondary quality" (as I have called it) which Butler supposes is given to us by conscience. I think it is clear that he has in mind at least two things, (1) the feeling of approval or disapproval, and (2) the mark of authority. Of the first little need be said. It is a perfectly familiar feeling. What of the second? Is it a feeling or a judgment or something else? I think it is fairly clear that Butler includes what at any rate appears to be a judgment in his account of conscience. He speaks of a man's conscience in Sermon I, not merely as approving an action, but also as "the reflection that it is his proper business, what belongs to him, that it is right and commendable so to do."<sup>1</sup> Authority cannot be a feeling, for in the Preface to the *Sermons*, Butler speaks of it as a *relation* between conscience and the other principles of the mind.

The several parts [of a system] even considered as a whole do not complete the idea, unless in the notion of a whole you include the relations and respects which those parts have to each other. . . .

Thus it is with regard to the inward frame of man. Appetites, passions, affections, and the principle of reflection, considered merely as the several parts of our inward nature, do not at all give us an idea of the system or constitution of this nature; because the constitution is formed by somewhat not yet taken into consideration, namely, by the relations which these several parts have to each other; the chief of which is the authority of reflection or conscience. It is from considering the relations which the several appetites and passions in the human frame have to each other, and, above all, the supremacy of reflection or conscience, that we get the idea of the system or constitution of human nature.<sup>2</sup>

We have already seen<sup>3</sup> that in the *Analogy*, Butler speaks of the authority of conscience as the promise of reward and threat of punishment by God. It is difficult to reconcile this with the statement of the Preface to the *Sermons* that the authority of conscience is a relation of superiority in which conscience stands to all other principles. I think that by the authority of conscience Butler must mean this:—Conscience is a feeling of approval or disapproval, attended with an immediate judgment or "perception" that an action is right or wrong. These two combined have the force of a command that we do or refrain from the action. But commands or laws include sanctions;<sup>4</sup> so that the command to do an action "neces-

<sup>1</sup> Gladstone, II, 36.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-8.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 223-4, above.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. p. 224, above.

sarily includes in it, at least, an implicit promise in case of obedience, or threatening in case of disobedience." Our sense of good and ill desert (this is a second "perception" which may, but need not necessarily, follow the perception that an action is right or wrong) "renders the sanction explicit," but the authority, that is the commanding force, of the first "perception" *implies* such a sanction. This commanding force of conscience *shows* it to be in a relation of superiority to all other principles.

Must we then say that conscience consists of two operations, (1) a feeling of approval or disapproval, and (2) a command to act or not to act, and that there is no genuine *judgment* included? If so, what becomes of the statement that a man's conscience is not merely the approval of an action but also "the reflection that it is his proper business, what belongs to him, that it is right and commendable so to do"? Is this apparent judgment only a command stated in propositional form, as some modern philosophers would have us believe? If so, what is the "command" said by Butler to be the *reflection* that something is the case? It is clear, I think, that there is yet a third element in conscience, an element of judgment. The key to what Butler thinks this judgment to be is contained in the phrase "it is his proper business, what belongs to him."

According to Butler, when conscience pronounces an action to be right, what happens is this: (1) there is a feeling of approval; (2) there is a command, with its implied sanctions, to do the action approved; (3) there is the judgment that to follow this commanding approval is to act *conformably* to man's nature. The first and third of these operations are, I think, what Butler is referring to in the *Dissertation* when he says that conscience may be "considered as a sentiment of the understanding, or as a perception of the heart; or, which seems the truth, as including both." To modern ears this language at first sounds curious. We should almost expect the names to be reversed, to be told of a perception of the understanding and of a sentiment of the heart. Whewell indeed actually suggested emending the passage in this way!<sup>1</sup> But the difficulty which we feel

<sup>1</sup> Apropos of Whewell, Mr. Carritt tells me of the proof-reader who corrected

"Books in the running brooks,  
Sermons in stones"

to

"Stones in the running brooks,  
Sermons in books."

Mr. Carritt himself believes (as he has informed me in a letter) that Butler is thinking of Aristotle's ἡ ἀρετικὴ τοῦ νοῦς ἢ ἀρετὴ διανοητικὴ, and that "the chiasmic oxymoron is intentional," expressing contempt for the controversy. This is an attractive suggestion, but if it is right why does Butler go on to say "or, which seems the truth, as including both"? The figure, if it is such, would at least cease to be "oxy." However, the sentence as a whole certainly does express contempt for this sort of controversy.

A. E. Taylor, who seems to take somewhat seriously Whewell's absurd suggestion, gives a defence of the original reading which seems to me over-subtle and unnecessary (*Philosophical Studies*, p. 299).

## BISHOP BUTLER'S VIEW OF CONSCIENCE

is simply due to failure to realize that Butler's phraseology is now archaic. In his time the word "sentiment" was more often used to mean "judgment" than "feeling."<sup>1</sup> And by the word "perception" Butler means something analogous to the perceptions of sense; by calling it a perception of the "heart" he means that it is a perception by introspection as contrasted with the external senses. The empiricists of his time would express the same thought by talking of a perception of inner sense, and in modern terminology we should speak of introspecting; because Butler tries to use decent English instead of technical jargon, he is misunderstood. The object of a perception of the heart, i.e. of inner sense or introspection, will of course be a feeling.<sup>2</sup> In this sentence, then, the only one in which Butler refers directly to the epistemological controversy, he holds that conscience consists (1) of a rational judgment, and (2) of an introspected feeling. The latter is the feeling of approval. The former is, I think, the judgment that results from the relation of superiority (one aspect of authority) in which this approving faculty stands to the other principles of our nature; it is the judgment that to do what we approve is to act conformably or suitably to our nature.

Now this suitability to our nature is not the same characteristic as the ultimate moral characteristic, the attribute of being fit to be done. The first is a relation, one of whose terms is human nature, the second appears not to be a relation and is independent of the constitution of any mind, human or divine. Furthermore, the first is not a *moral* characteristic at all. This may be seen from the passages in which the relation is mentioned.

Suppose a brute creature, Butler says, by any bait to be allured into a snare, by which he is destroyed. He plainly followed the bent of his nature, leading him to gratify his appetite: there is an entire correspondence between his whole nature and such an action: such action therefore is natural. But suppose a man, foreseeing the same danger of certain ruin, should rush into it for the sake of present gratification; he in this instance would follow his strongest desire, as did the brute creature: but there would be as manifest a disproportion, between the nature of a man and such an action, as between the meanest work of art and the skill of the greatest master in that art.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Reid's strictures on the use of the word "sentiment" to mean a feeling in the moral theories of Hume and Adam Smith.

"Authors who place moral approbation in feeling only, very often use the word *sentiment*, to express feeling without judgment. This I take likewise to be an abuse of a word. Our moral determinations may, with propriety, be called *moral sentiments*. For the word *sentiment*, in the English language, never, as I conceive, signifies mere feeling, but judgment accompanied with feeling. It was wont to signify opinion or judgment of any kind, but, of late, is appropriated to signify an opinion or judgment, that strikes and produces some agreeable or uneasy emotion." *Active Powers*, Essay V, ch. 7. Reid in fact goes a little too far, as I have noted on p. 153 of *The Moral Sense*.

For my interpretation of the phrase "sentiment of the understanding," cf. Richard Price who uses the same phrase (*Review of Morals*, p. 129 of my edition) to mean an act of knowing; this is clear from the fact that he is there controverting those who will not allow that rightness is known by the understanding.

<sup>2</sup> The frequent expression "*reflex approbation*" refers, I believe, to the "*reflection*" Locke talks of, i.e. introspection.

## PHILOSOPHY

Which disproportion arises, *not from considering the action singly in itself, or in its consequences; but from comparison of it with the nature of the agent.* And since such an action is utterly disproportionate to the nature of man, it is in the strictest and most proper sense unnatural; this word expressing that disproportion.<sup>1</sup>

Later in the same sermon, Butler says that if conscience were on a par with other principles, there would be no "unsuitableness" or lack of "correspondence" between parricide and the nature of man.<sup>2</sup> Other illustrations of his usage are the following:

The whole argument, which I have been now insisting upon, may be thus summed up, and given you in one view. The nature of man is adapted to some course of action or other. Upon comparing some actions with this nature, they appear suitable and correspondent to it: from comparison of other actions with the same nature, there arises to our view some unsuitableness or disproportion.<sup>3</sup>

Reason alone, whatever any one may wish, is not in reality a sufficient motive of virtue in such a creature as man; but this reason joined with those affections which God has impressed upon his heart: and when these are allowed scope to exercise themselves, but under strict government and direction of reason; then it is we act suitably to our nature, and to the circumstances God has placed us in.<sup>4</sup>

The pleasure arising from the satisfaction of an appetite or passion, Butler says, could not exist

were it not for that prior suitableness between the object and the passion.<sup>5</sup>

It will be seen that Butler finds this relation of suitability to exist between the following pairs of terms: (1) an action and the nature of man; (2) an action and the nature of an animal; (3) a work of art and the skill of an artist; (4) a passion and its object. The relation in the last three cases cannot possibly be a moral relation. (To guard against a possible objection concerning case (4), I ought perhaps to point out that in the passage in question Butler is not talking of the sort of emotions that we should call good and of which it might be said that they are morally suitable to their objects.) Yet I see no reason to doubt that Butler thinks the relation in all these cases is exactly the same.

A further point that may be made is this. Even if we confine ourselves to case (1), it will be observed that Butler speaks of *prudent* actions, as well as obligatory actions, as conforming to the nature of man. In the first passage I quoted, he definitely speaks of a prudent action; and of the other three passages dealing with the suitability

<sup>1</sup> Sermon II (Gladstone, II, 52).

<sup>2</sup> Sermon III (Gladstone, II, 64).

<sup>3</sup> Sermon V (Gladstone, II, 83).

<sup>4</sup> Gladstone, II, 57.

<sup>5</sup> Sermon XI (Gladstone, II, 158).

## BISHOP BUTLER'S VIEW OF CONSCIENCE

of certain actions to man's nature, only one is restricted to action that is morally right or wrong, namely the passage about parricide; the language of the other two passages can be taken, and I think is meant to be taken, to cover prudential actions also. Now of course Butler thinks that prudence is a virtue and that a man is morally obliged to follow his interest. But I want to suggest that Butler is perhaps led to think this, not because he has a different intuition from most people about the moral fitness or the moral indifference of following one's interest, but because he thinks of virtue as acting suitably to man's nature; since the relation of suitability he is talking about applies to prudential as well as to moral actions, he is led to think of prudence as a virtue. I should not want to insist too strongly upon this suggestion, for other people besides Butler have thought and still think that prudence is a virtue. But I think it plausible to say that Butler was at least partially led to think this because of his theory.

In the one passage in which he treats of the controversy between the holders of the moral sense theory and the rationalists, Butler claims to resolve the controversy by declaring that both parties are right. Conscience really includes both a moral sense, i.e. a feeling of approval or disapproval, and a moral judgment, viz. the judgment that the action contemplated is suitable or contrary to our nature. I have tried to show that this judgment is not a *moral* judgment at all, so that Butler has not resolved the controversy. What Butler calls conscience is not, so far as I can see, the perception of a moral attribute proper. Where Butler does talk of a genuinely moral attribute, the attribute of being *fit*, he speaks of it as discerned by speculative reason. This attribute can be seen to attach to actions in two ways: an action may be fit to be done, and if it is done it is fit to be rewarded (or if omitted, fit to be punished); "desert" or "merit" may thus be analysed in terms of fitness. Both these applications of the moral attribute, Butler holds, are discerned by speculative reason. Conscience tells us, not that an act is fit to be done, but that it is suitable to our nature (a characteristic which is a sign that God wills it to be done); nor does it tell us that such an action, if done, is fit to be rewarded, and if omitted fit to be punished, but promises that if it is done God *will* reward us, and threatens that if it is omitted God *will* punish us.<sup>1</sup> If we go on to judge that God's will is determined by what is fitting, we are using, Butler holds, speculative reason. I suggest, therefore, that in spite of appearances to the contrary, Butler is as much a rationalist as Clarke on morals proper, and that what he calls conscience, which is indeed a greatly

<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 224-5, above.

improved version of Hntcheson's moral sense, is not strictly speaking a faculty of *moral* judgment.<sup>1</sup>

This conclusion, that Butler's conscience is not a moral faculty, may appear very shocking to admirers of Butler, but I see no reason why it should. "His chief merit," as Professor Broad has said,<sup>2</sup> "is as a moral psychologist. He states with great clearness the principles according to which decent people do feel and act and judge." I think it is perfectly true that most people think of actions they approve as the sort of actions to do which God has placed them in the world. They do take their approval to be a sign of their function, of God's purpose in making them what they are and placing them in the world. Now in thinking this they may be doing one of two things: (1) They may be thinking that "right" or "obligatory" means "what God commands," and in that case they usually use as the criterion of right action the commands of God as set forth in the Bible. If so, they are not, strictly, judging and acting as moral agents, but as religious persons seeking to fulfil the will of God. That this is the situation of many good men I do not doubt. (2) They may be really coming to know moral principles and mistaking the nature of their discernment. I use the phrase "coming to know" for the process to which W. E. Johnson gave the rather inappropriate name "intuitive induction." The first stages of this process are vague in the extreme and have nothing like the clearness of fully conscious knowing. It may therefore be, and often is, easily mistaken for something else, belief or faith. It is perhaps this vagueness of the initial stages of "coming to know" that causes it to be called intuition and to be thought different from knowledge. Those who use the term "intuition," unless in calling themselves Intuitionists they take the view I am suggesting is the right one, think of it as a kind of mystic insight or faith; those who deride it think of it as a mysterious and

<sup>1</sup> My apparently paradoxical conclusion about Butler's treatment of conscience receives some support from the verdict of Sir Leslie Stephen in his *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*.

"Conscience is God's viceroy; our nature means 'the voice of God within us.' . . . The constitution of man, like the constitution of his dwelling-place, points unmistakably to his Creator. In both cases we recognize the final causes of the phenomena" (Vol. II, pp. 48-9).

"The conception of a self-evidencing power seems to involve a vicious circle. Exclude the idea of right from the supremacy, and the statement becomes inaccurate; admit it, and the definition includes the very thing to be defined. Conscience must, in some way, derive its credentials from some other authority than itself. . . . Butler's escape from the vicious circle really consists in his assumption that the conscience represents the will of God. He is blind to the difficulty, because he conceives the final cause of conscience to be evident. . . . A blind instinct, ordering us to do this and that, for arbitrary or inscrutable reasons, is entitled to no special respect so long as we confine ourselves to nature. But when behind nature we are conscious of nature's God, we reverence our instincts as implanted by a divine hand, and enquire no further into their origin and purpose. No suspicion occurred to him that the marks of a divine origin which he supposed himself to be discovering by impartial examination, might be merely the result of his having stated the problem in terms of theology. As in the 'Analogy' his argument depends on assuming suffering to be supernatural punishment, so here it depends on assuming the promptings of conscience to be supernatural commands" (Vol. II, pp. 50-1).

<sup>2</sup> *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> I leave open the question whether all knowledge of necessity is in some sense analytic, and whether moral principles depend ultimately on postulates.

## BISHOP BUTLER'S VIEW OF CONSCIENCE

fictitious feeling. It might be well to drop the word as another name for knowing, on account of this ambiguity in its usage.

I think that people who come to know moral principles, and fully recognize the nature of the process, then cease to think of right actions in the way described by Butler. But I should say that many people fail (or rather, that it never occurs to them to try) to recognize coming to know moral principles for what it is; so that they remain in states (1) or (2). Of their judgment that an act is right, Butler's account of conscience is an excellent description. But in treating of moral judgment proper Butler simply follows Clarke.

### APPENDIX<sup>1</sup>

My friend and former pupil Mr. Thomas McPherson has argued, in his article "The Development of Bishop Butler's Ethics" published in *Philosophy*, Part 1, Vol. XXIII, No. 87, Part 2, Vol. XXIV, No. 88, that there are two different theories of ethics in Butler's work, an earlier theory of "Ethical Eudaemonism" in the *Sermons* (including their Preface), and a later theory of "Intuitionism" in the *Analogy and Dissertation on Virtue*. By "Ethical Eudaemonism" Mr. McPherson means the view that our sole duty, in the end, is to pursue our own happiness; self-interest is, as he puts it, the ground of rightness for Butler in the *Sermons*. By "Intuitionism" he means the view that we are immediately aware of the obligatoriness of particular actions in particular situations. Mr. McPherson recognizes that the immediate intuitions of conscience in the *Analogy* are to be taken as signs of God's will, which is determined by absolute rightness. If Mr. McPherson is right, the interpretation given in my paper will apply only to Butler's later doctrine.

I think that Mr. McPherson has established a development in Butler's views, and a change at least of emphasis in that Butler stresses the reflective aspect of conscience more in the *Sermons* than in the *Analogy*. But I doubt whether we can properly draw quite so rigid a distinction between the ethics of the *Sermons* and that of the *Analogy and Dissertation*. Mr. McPherson, who points out that the doctrine of human ignorance plays a central part in the *Analogy*, himself notes that this concept is also the subject of Sermon XV. He further recognizes two passages of the earlier work which conflict with his interpretation, (a) the passage in the Preface commenting on Shaftesbury's discussion of the moral sceptic, (b) a footnote to Sermon XII; he reasonably suggests that the Preface and footnotes, having been written later than the *Sermons* themselves, may be regarded as containing foreshadowings of the later doctrine. But there are yet other passages in the earlier work which do not accord easily with Mr. McPherson's interpretation of it. Some of them come in the Preface, and so could still be regarded by Mr. McPherson as examples of an intermediate view, but there are others in the body of the *Sermons* themselves. E.g. in Sermon VII, Butler says: "In all common ordinary cases we see intuitively at first view what is our duty, what is the honest part."<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless I agree that there is a broad shift of emphasis from the reflective to the immediate judgment in Butler's conception of conscience, and the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. McPherson has sent me some valuable comments on a first draft of this Appendix, and I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to him.

<sup>2</sup> Gladstone, II, 112.



effect of this is to obscure, in the *Analogy* doctrine, that element in the judgment of conscience which is concerned with regarding duty as what is suitable to human nature considered as a mechanism whose function can be inferred from its constitution. If pressed about the immediate judgments of right and wrong described in the *Analogy*, Butler would, I think, still maintain that, on reflection, we can analyse them in this way.

A more important point is that I think Mr. McPherson is mistaken in holding that in the *Sermons*, Butler regards private happiness as the basic ground of *all* virtue.<sup>1</sup> Mr. McPherson regards the two passages mentioned earlier as the only ones inconsistent with this thesis, and holds, in opposition to A. E. Taylor and Professor Broad, that the "cool hour" passage is not a concession to opponents for the sake of argument but a typical statement of Butler's own view. On this question Taylor and Professor Broad seem to me in the right. Here are some further passages in the *Sermons* which go against Mr. McPherson's interpretation.

"The goodness or badness of actions does not arise from hence, that the epithet, interested or disinterested, may be applied to them, any more than that any other indifferent epithet, suppose inquisitive or jealous, may or may not be applied to them; not from their being attended with present or future pleasure or pain; but from their being what they are; namely, what becomes such creatures as we are, what the state of the case requires, or the contrary.

"Or in other words, we may judge and determine, that an action is morally good or evil, before we so much as consider, whether it be interested or disinterested. . . . Self-love in its due degree is as just and morally good, as any affection whatever [but, apparently, not more so]."<sup>2</sup>

The Epicurean system, while "it would manifestly prevent numberless follies and vices . . . is indeed by no means the religious or *even moral* institution of life."<sup>3</sup>

There was good ground "for that assertion, maintained by the several ancient schools of philosophy against the Epicureans, namely, that virtue is to be pursued as an end, eligible in and for itself."<sup>4</sup>

The coincidence of benevolence and self-love is "a proof that we were made for both."<sup>5</sup>

"The sum of the whole is plainly this. The nature of man considered in his single capacity, and with respect only to the present world, is adapted and leads him to attain the greatest happiness he can for himself in the present world. The nature of man considered in his public or social capacity leads him to a right behaviour in society, to that course of life which we call virtue."<sup>6</sup>

From this summing up, in the final paragraph of Sermon I, we can see that Butler takes for granted here as common ground between himself and his audience that virtue is benevolence (not that he would agree, in closer discussion, that benevolence is the whole of virtue). His aim in this and some other of the *Sermons* is to show that virtue (or benevolence) is not contrary to self-love, but not that virtue is self-love or is grounded on self-love.

<sup>1</sup> In this connexion I think Mr. McPherson has established the important distinction he finds in Butler between genuine and supposed self-love.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to *Sermons* (Gladstone, II, 21-2).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* (Gladstone, II, 23). My italics.

<sup>4</sup> Sermon I (Gladstone, II, 33).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* (Gladstone, II, 24).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* (Gladstone, II, 43).

## BISHOP BUTLER'S VIEW OF CONSCIENCE

Conscience "pronounces determinately some actions to be *in themselves* just, right, good; others to be *in themselves* evil, wrong, unjust."

And the passage quoted earlier:

"In all common ordinary cases we see intuitively at first view what is our duty, what is the honest part."

"That mankind is a community, that we all stand in a relation to each other, that there is a public end and interest of society which each particular is obliged to promote, is the sum of morals."

In working out his interpretation of Butler's theory in the *Sermons* as egoistic, Mr. McPherson holds that for Butler not merely do virtue and genuine self-love lead to the same actions (there is no doubt that Butler does think this), but conscience and self-love are, practically, the same faculty. In connexion with this particular thesis Mr. McPherson, like the late Dr. Reginald Jackson but from an independent examination, holds that Butler regards benevolence as a particular affection and not as a principle of equal standing with self-love. The latter view is that given by Professor Broad. Dr. Jackson and Mr. McPherson have persuaded me that benevolence is never placed quite on a level with self-love, but I think they are mistaken in holding that it is virtually always regarded as a particular affection. It is clear that Butler's general tendency in Sermon XI is to speak of benevolence as a particular affection which stands in relation to self-love much as other particular affections do. But it is also clear that elsewhere, and especially in Sermon I, he regards self-love and benevolence as roughly co-ordinate (though often with benevolence on a slightly lower level). Mr. McPherson in his article, notes that Butler's first introduction of benevolence in Sermon I, says: "There is a natural principle of *benevolence* in man, which is in some degree to *society*, what *self-love* is to the *individual*."<sup>1</sup> But he goes too far in adding that "this is the only place" where Butler speaks of benevolence as a general principle.<sup>2</sup> In Sermon V, Butler writes of "a settled reasonable principle of benevolence to mankind."<sup>3</sup> And in Sermon XII: "When benevolence is said to be the sum of virtue, it is not spoken of as a blind propension, but as a principle in reasonable creatures, and so to be directed by their reason."<sup>4</sup> There are other passages where, though the word "principle" is not used, benevolence is placed on a level with self-love and, like self-love, distinguished from particular affections and passions.

"The *several passions and affections*, which are distinct both from benevolence and self-love. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

"The sum is, men have various appetites, passions, and particular affections, quite distinct both from self-love and from benevolence: all of these have a tendency to promote both public and private good, and may be considered as respecting others and ourselves equally and in common; but some of them seem most immediately to respect others, or tend to public good; others of them most immediately to respect self, or tend to private good: as the former are not benevolence, so the latter are not self-love: neither sort are instances of our love either to ourselves or others."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sermon II (Gladstone, II, 51). My italics.

<sup>2</sup> Sermon IX (Gladstone, II, 131).

<sup>3</sup> In his letter of comments on this Appendix.

<sup>4</sup> Gladstone, II, 31. Like Reginald Jackson, Mr. McPherson rightly draws attention to "in some degree."

<sup>5</sup> Reginald Jackson was almost equally emphatic: *Philosophy*, Vol. XVIII (1943), p. 123.

<sup>6</sup> Gladstone, II, 85.

<sup>7</sup> Sermon I (Gladstone, II, 33-4).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* (Gladstone, II, 35).

## PHILOSOPHY

"Hunger is to be considered as a private appetite; because the end for which it was given us is the preservation of the individual. Desire of esteem is a public passion; because the end for which it was given us is to regulate our behaviour towards society. . . . the appetite is no more self-love, than the passion is benevolence."<sup>1</sup>

"From this comparison of benevolence and self-love, of our public and private affections. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

The fact is that Butler is not so nice in his use of language as to stick too closely to his distinction between general "principles" and particular "affections." He often uses "affections" for the former, and sometimes "principles" for the latter. Thus in Sermon XI, he calls self-love an "affection" to our private good, benevolence an "affection" to the good of others, and in the next sentence he uses the word "principles" for those propensities by which self-love is gratified.<sup>3</sup> And in Sermon XII, he speaks of "the two general affections, benevolence and self-love."<sup>4</sup>

As I have mentioned, there is no doubt that the general tendency in Sermon XI is to regard benevolence as a particular affection in relation to the general principle of self-love, and this, I think, is responsible for the view of Reginald Jackson and Mr. McPherson about benevolence. But the explanation of the tendency of Sermon XI, as contrasted with passages treating benevolence as a general principle, is that given by Gladstone in his note on p. 162 (Vol. II) of his edition:

"The objector causes him to consider fully the question how far and how self-love competes with benevolence. And here it appears that he regards benevolence itself mainly from a point of view which gives it the form of one of these particular affections.

"There is another view of it, under which, instead of standing apart from self-love as a particular affection, it stands by the side of it. In this view, while self-love is a comprehensive affection which uses all appropriate objects as instruments for our own happiness, so benevolence is an affection of the like kind, which uses them for the happiness of our neighbour."

And this double way of looking at benevolence (another instance of Butler's often illuminating tendency to regard a situation from two aspects) is surely recognized by Butler himself at the end of this very sermon (a passage to which Gladstone draws attention in his note), where he says:

"Love of our neighbour is one of those affections [the gratification of which constitutes happiness]. This, considered as a *virtuous principle*, is gratified by a consciousness of *endeavouring* to promote the good of others; but considered as a natural affection, its gratification consists in the actual accomplishment of this endeavour."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sermon I, (Gladstone, II, 34-5 footnote).

<sup>2</sup> Gladstone, II, 163

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* (Gladstone, II, 38).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.

# THE AESTHETIC AND SCIENCE

JOSHUA C. GREGORY

WHEN a rainbow spans the sky the eye may rest with simple rapture on the arch of colours, or the mind may interpret it as an interplay between raindrops and light. This perceptibly separates the aesthetic relish of the colours from the scientific understanding of the bow. Archbishop Temple distinguished the restfulness of art from the restlessness of science. This applies to the wider aesthetic which includes natural products, such as snow-scenes or daffodils or rainbows, with the pictures, statues, buildings, poems, and other products of man-made art. The rainbow clearly separates the understanding sought by science from the immediate contemplative aesthetic satisfaction with the colours.

Music, Temple also notes, presents beauty, not truths. The profane parrot who lived in a gilded cage isolates another purely aesthetic aspect of experience. Every Sunday at one o'clock, when the clergyman came to dinner, a cloth over polly's cage, to dam the flow of damns, accustomed the hird to a weekly covering. One Monday the clergyman arrived unexpectedly at lunch time. As hurrying feet and anxious hands covered polly's cage the hird loudly remarked, "Well! Well! That's a damned short week!" The revel in the ludicrous of the parrot story resembles the aesthetic preoccupation with the rainbow's colours or the beauty of music. The enigmatical, wholly indefinable, unmistakable, familiar, and absolutely unique sense of the ludicrous is also too unlike delight in colour, or in the beauty of music, or in any artistic gratification, to be unhesitatingly called aesthetic. The relaxed comic, also, seems to differ from the contemplative aesthetic: the relaxation seems to be opposed to the dynamic and intense which have so often been noted in the sense of beauty. If art is restful, as Temple said, then, adapting Walter Hylton, the restfulness is "a busy rest." Lipps and Groos deny that the comic is an aesthetic experience; Lascelles Abercrombie affirms that it is, and the comic is usually included in the aesthetic. Cassirer affirms that "comic art" has "in the highest degree" the "sympathetic vision" of "all art." Whether the parrot story has this high sympathetic vision or not, it does what the rainbow does—isolates a purely aesthetic aspect of experience. The ludicrous, at one point, samples the pervasion of experience by this aesthetic aspect.

The wholly comic is as indifferent to truth or error, or to the understanding of things, as the number five seems to be indifferent to space or time. A purely geometrical pattern of colour may be simply beautiful without any relevance to truth or understanding.

## PHILOSOPHY

The rainbow colours, the wholly ludicrous, the musical harmony, and the geometrical pattern, by isolating the aesthetic aspect, help the recognition of its pervasiveness in experience. The aesthetic appeal of astronomy seems to Sir James Jeans to tend to predominate over the scientific appeal, for the aesthetic side makes more men into astronomers than the scientific side does, and many astronomers, when made, are mainly interested in their science because it is "the most poetical and the most aesthetically gratifying of the sciences."

The "sense for style" is an "aesthetic sense," as Whitehead says and most agree. Whitehead emphasizes the pervasiveness of aesthetic experience by recognizing style in science, logic, and practical execution as well as in art and literature. The aesthetic aspect is very pervasive if Whitehead rightly calls style "the ultimate morality of the mind." In literary style the aesthetic aspect is intuitively discerned in complex experience. The intuitive discernment of the aesthetic ranges widely—in the smooth working of a loom, for instance, or in the sweet cricket drive over the ropes. Such extensions of range trouble the assessors of the aesthetic in poetry and art. When Lascelles Abercrombie includes kissing a girl the "aesthetic" is uneasily suspected of being anything pleasant or, at any rate, delightfully pleasant. Bosanquet suspects some trace, at least, of the aesthetic in all pleasant feeling.

Coleridge tries to preserve the dignity of the aesthetic by honouring beauty above the merely agreeable. If a Frenchman, he writes, called the flavour of mutton beautiful, he would be promptly recognized as a Frenchman. This implies that the flavour of mutton is not beautiful, and Coleridge can use his essential distinction between the agreeable and beauty to exclude the mutton. The grand concert of frogs delighted a Dutch gentleman, when he first heard it in England, more than Catalina singing in the compositions of Cimarosa delighted him. This Dutch gentleman, Coleridge says, was sensible, accomplished, and quite aware that his feeling was ludicrous. The frogs' concert, the context implies, tempted the Dutchman to call it beautiful because it happened to be very agreeable to him.

The aesthetic has a wide range if "an actual fact is a fact of aesthetic experience." It may be wise to be wary of taking Whitehead's statement too naively, for he thinks in his own way. An "intense experience," he also says, is "an aesthetic fact," but is this true of an arrow in the heel? The fatal wound of Achilles can be an aesthetic item in myth, and Bullough, more prudently, says that anything may be aesthetically contemplated. A. E. Taylor may be too sure that a bald fact, as such and irrespective of its quality, cannot be adored. The virtue may be in the "adored," but a simple fact, as such, apparently can have aesthetic quality. It has when £110 are paid for a Jubilee-issue postage stamp incorrectly printed

a greenish-blue. The disgusting snore, no doubt, must be contemplated as the trumpet of sleep to make it at all aesthetically pleasing, but there seems to be good reason for any fact, simply as a fact, to have at least minor aesthetic quality, unless something swamps it. The mind searches vigilantly for the assured because thinking is mere vanity without a firm footing on facts. Thus, naturally enough, any assured, or apparently assured, fact, however trivial, may gratify ever vigilant curiosity aesthetically, however temporarily.

Descriptions of the aesthetic, including the beautiful and the artistic, usually stress its pleasure or delight, and apply such words or phrases as appreciation, Bullough's "psychical distance," or T. S. Eliot's *autotelic* work of art. They significantly insist that the aesthetic is intuitive and contemplative. Temple calls the aesthetic experience purely mystical in its "direct and immediate apprehension of an absolutely satisfying object." The contemplation in the mental repose of art, he further says, though it is still, is also active—Hylton's "busy rest." Such descriptions are probably usually modelled on eminent appearances of the aesthetic in art or poetry, but they seem to apply, in appropriate degrees, to a whole range of aesthetic experience. They may seem too lyrical for the cricketer's drive, but even the direct feel of a perfectly timed, perfectly adjusted hit has something absolutely satisfying in it. The batsman, if only for one brief fleeting moment, lives in Paradise.

If all experience is aesthetic, though the aesthetic judgment may be swamped, as Lascelles Abercrombie affirms, then the aesthetic aspect of experience includes kissing a girl, the smoothly working loom, the smack over the ropes, the frog's chorus and perhaps the slighted flavour of mutton. An aesthetic aspect does seem to pervade experience from the simple contemplation of a trivial actual fact to an eminency in *Paradise Lost* or in a Botticelli painting. The aesthetic, in this respect like pleasure, is always aesthetic, though it is very variously embodied with different degrees of honour.

The red of a pillar-box has a sheer sensory core. Sophisticated perception contains more than this—that the red is red, for example. All perception has a cognitive aspect; it also has a reflectively recognizable aspect which is sheer sensory experience of colour. This colour can give aesthetic delight—it gives it in the coloured magnificence of the sunset "There are three green things—meat, wine, and gold": the presumably honorific sense of "green" in this Arabic saying may derive, as Wallis Chapman suggests, from the sumptuous oasis in the arid desert. The associations of colours, deep seriousness with dark blue for instance, disturb the ascription of an immediate aesthetic response to the sunset colours as such. Volkelt's theory relegates colour to the pre-aesthetic. Coleridge ascribes the beauty of the sunset to the conjunction of colour with form and relation.

## PHILOSOPHY

This conjunction is present in the daffodil, or in the delicately-shaped shell, or in any aesthetically moving object. Every experience has its cognitive or intellectual aspect however the contemplative aesthetic dominates it. The delicate shell must be perceived to manifest its beauty, and all perception has its quota of cognition. The cognitive varies between maximum and minimum, as the aesthetic does, and the intellectual moves towards the maximum as questing science tries to understand. Listen to the harmonious music of nature, Aristide Maillol advises, but do not try to discover its causes, as you ought not to ask why an apple-tree produces apples. This is one mode of what Herbert Read calls "a specifically aesthetic attitude towards nature." Science turns from the gusto of the apple to the puzzle of its growth.

Emile Mâle seems to have stimulated the recognition of the aesthetic prompting to science by his *Religious Art in France in the Thirteenth Century*—in 1913 Dora Nassey published a translation of the third edition. Thorndike, for example, includes the book in his reference, and Crowther specifically names Mâle when they discuss what Whitehead calls, in the same connection, "the Rise of Naturalism in the later Middle Ages . . ."—the rise of "naturalistic art." Sculptured plants and animals, lovingly delineated, reveal craftsmen who observe and artists who are naturalists, though the fauna includes fanciful chimeras. An architect's sketches of a lobster, or of two paroquets on a perch, manifest the same delight in direct accurate delineation. Thorndike notes the impetus to science, in Albertus Magnus for example, by the observant study of natural facts; Whitehead discerns "a final ingredient necessary for the rise of modern science" in the direct joyful apprehension of things. Later on, as Whitehead notes, Leonardo da Vinci carries the patient observation of the naturalistic artist into science.

The aesthetically moving rainbow became a sign set in the sky; to-day it is an ordered interplay between raindrops and light. As questing science, intent on understanding, passes from aesthetic relish to ordered concepts, then to the contemplation of an ordered whole, of Coleridge's "multeity in unity," it achieves its own peculiar aesthetic gratification. This aesthetic aspect, as Croce says, appears when active understanding passes into contemplation, and every scientific work is also a work of art, for science and art meet on the aesthetic side. The aesthetic aspect passes from the sensory to the intellectual. The beautiful, Coleridge insists, because it does not originate in sensations, belongs to the intellect. According to Whitehead, "intellectual beauty," the "delicate adjustment of thought to thought," though it can be "hymned in terms relevant to sensible beauty," is "beautiful by stretch of metaphor." In either case the intellectual is recognized in the aesthetic aspect of experience.

## PHILOSOPHY

eighteenth-century minds because it made them understand, or because it gratified them aesthetically, or because it did both. The aesthetic may usurp intellectual understanding if successful ordering or harmonization of concepts persuasively simulates truth. This is the more likely if, as Roger Fry suspects, the unity-emotion in both art and science is identical in kind.

Nature seemed to Newton to be "pleased with simplicity"; it now seems to many that it is the simplifying thinker who is pleased with his simplification. Nature still seems to Einstein to realize the "simplest conceivable mathematical ideas"—those embodied in the fewest possible independent postulates. Experience seems to him to justify this. According to a paper by the physicist Born, reasonably epitomized, nature compels the mind to simplify her; then the mind attributes the simplification to the nature simplified. Though "simple" may have no one simple meaning, it often denotes the unifying principle, as Nature is "very simple" for Newton when she moves all the heavenly bodies by "the Attraction of Gravity." It is natural enough to speak of the "beautifully simple," and, according to Sullivan, science still uses the aesthetic criterion, but calls it "simplicity." In so far as the simple is connected with the unified complex it has the aesthetic charm which may lure science to accept a simplification as logically complete.

Science, according to Whitehead, must aim at the simplest explanation of complex facts; then she is apt, erroneously, to regard the facts themselves as simple. If the mind must simplify, and all simplification over-simplifies, as Whitehead also says, science is pre-determined by its nature to error. In "Seek simplicity, and distrust it" Whitehead urges the mind to do what it must do, and then to suspect what it has done. Simplification has its logical triumphs—it has one when it shortens "He is my baby's father's sister-in-law's husband" into "He is my brother-in-law." It also, if it has been assessed rightly, allures science aesthetically into error, and compels her to advance by retrieving her mistakes.

"An Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam. . . ." This aphorism may have consequences for the familiar "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," and through them for science, since it delights aesthetically in spite of its obsolete doctrine. It clearly separates the discredited truth aspect even as this is submerged in the dominating aesthetic aspect.

Poetry does this still more effectively. In

Rising and cawing at the gun's report,  
Sever themselves, and madly sweep the sky;

Puck puts the flight of the wild geese from the "creeping fowler" into



## THE AESTHETIC AND SCIENCE

what Whitehead calls a "poetic transcript," but poetry is not always a poetic transcript of the factual or true.

Full fathom five thy father lies;  
Of his bones are coral made;  
Those are pearls that were his eyes;  
Nothing of him that doth fade,  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.

Coral is not bones, eyes never become pearls, and, though the rotting corpse is strange, it is not rich. Yet these scientifically outrageous lines are poetry—Shakespearean poetry.

Truth itself may satisfy aesthetically. Truth, also, need not be damaged when the entrancing aesthetic co-exists with the untrue. La Rochefoucauld's "True love, like the ghost, is much talked of but seldom seen" pleases aesthetically, but it need not deceive. Analogously, a generous act may be beautiful, and an ungenerous act need not be approved because it is aesthetically set. In the high aesthetic appeal of the Prodigal Son the ungenerous Elder Brother remains ungenerous still, as Iago is the villainous Iago through the drama and poetry of the play.

From too much love of living  
From hope and fear set free,  
We thank with brief thanksgiving  
Whatever gods there be,  
That no life lives for ever,  
That dead men rise up never,  
That even the weariest river  
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Swinburne's lines are poetry, and C. D. Lewis knows they are, but for him their ostensible sense is untrue. Beauty, however, may still be truth, even when it seems to allure through the untrue, if poetry carries an intuition of truth beyond the confines of immediate fact. Lewis explains that the poetic meaning is not the apparent meaning, and cannot mislead. It shows something which could not be otherwise seen, which is not judged as ordinary truth is judged.

The aesthetic or artistic aspect of science is probably often called "poetic" because it is more conceptual than sensory. If art is essentially a special insight into reality, and is real life "at a new power," as Lewis says, science, if it does become art or poetry, may be aiming at one kind of truth and getting another, or it may be getting two kinds at once. Also, as Crusoe looked for tobacco and found a Bible, so science may look for truth and find the aesthetic. This may be so if Whitehead says rightly that intellectual beauty "is independent of the mere blunt question of truth." If every scientific theory is provisional and eventually superseded, then scientific concepts may be

## PHILOSOPHY

appropriately valued aesthetically as works of art. "The history of science," says Whitehead, "is strewn with the happy applications of discarded theories." Each theory, during its day, dispenses pragmatic benefits in utilities, such as the radio. The changing concepts themselves may ultimately be classed as works of art and valued wholly aesthetically.

If Swinburne intended an actual poetic transcript he took an aesthetic recompense from universal evanescence by expressing it in poetry, as Herrick takes his in

Gather ye Rose-buds while ye may,  
Old Time is still a-flying:  
And this same flower that smiles to-day,  
To-morrow will be dying.

There is aesthetic recompense again when the comic takes it in a joyful laugh from distress or danger or even from disaster. Science may take her aesthetic recompense for final failure to understand from the intellectual beauty of logically disposed concepts.

Augustine Birrell compares the truth-hunter to the nympholept who glimpsed a spiritual inmate in the sylvan shades and chased her all his life—quite vainly. Science is not likely to abandon the chase, whatever aesthetic recompenses she may constantly secure from the changing kaleidoscope of concepts.

The intuitive sense of beauty, Coleridge insists, excites pleasure, an immediate and absolute complacency, apart from any interest, or even contrary to it. The good, which is above beauty, and the agreeable, which is below it, are both interests, for they act on the will and prompt desire. In one place Coleridge includes utility among the interests, and with it, apparently inconsistently, beauty itself. He also recognizes "an Interest of Truth." Coleridge's statements imply that beauty can call to the soul when it co-exists with the untrue, but he would not agree with Whitehead that it is more important for a proposition to be interesting than to be true. Coleridge opposes "interest" to beauty; Whitehead transfers it from the true to the aesthetic. The principle may not apply to Bernard Shaw's "Every man over forty is a scoundrel" if it is merely a piece of facetious foolery without the "importance" proper to genuine "interest."

The proposition, conspicuously in the effective aphorism, has aesthetic and conceptual aspects. On Whitehead's assessment the logician and the scientist wrongly make the conceptual aspect primary or more fundamental. At some point in Hamlet's "To be, or not to be" speech, Whitehead contends, aesthetic delight eclipses judgment. This might mean no more than an occasional swamping of truth by poetry, but Whitehead presses logic and science hard by affirming that judgment is a "very rare component" in realizing propositions.

## THE AESTHETIC AND SCIENCE

Stace actually makes "interestingness" the "ultimate value at which science and philosophy aim." The intellectual, a thought or concept or proposition or theory or universal, interests; pictures, statues, and sunsets are beautiful. Stace discards intellectual beauty for interestingness, which has the same relation to concepts as beauty has to precepts. Since truth is not a value at all, science is handed over bodily to the aesthetic, though Stace himself separates the interesting intellectual from the aesthetic beautiful. This terminological revision does not conceal the transference of the scientific appeal to the artistic or aesthetic from insight into truth. If there are three great values, Stace affirms, they are Goodness, Beauty, and Interestingness. Thus Euclid's proof of the famous Pythagorean theorem *interests*; so does a scientific theory nicely adjusted to facts.

Whitehead expressly allows interest to contemplated truth. "Science and Art," he says, "are the consciously determined pursuit of Truth and of Beauty." Truth, however, is subordinate, for beauty, as the only self-justifying aim, is the wider and the more fundamental of the two. Truth need not be beautiful, it may be unseasonable, it may even be evil, and beauty can do without it. Whitehead, however, has no heart to treat truth too scurvily: it is an important promoter of beauty. Art aims at "Truthful Beauty," and it has some success if it achieves either Beauty or Truth. The aesthetic, however, predominates, for Truth is merely trivial without Beauty, while without Truth Beauty only drops to a lower level, and Truth only "matters because of Beauty."

This presentation of beauty and truth is applied mainly to art, but it implies that the aesthetic aspect is more significant than the truth aspect in science. Whitehead speaks of a revelation "as in a flash" of "intimate absolute Truth regarding the Nature of Things." This suggests an acme in truth rather than in beauty. It also suggests an analogue of the special insight into reality pleaded by Lewis. Since Whitehead calls this revelation "a curative function" of *Art*, science may not reach this great aesthetic height.

Any tendency to exalt the aesthetic, such as seems to be visible in Whitehead, is intelligible enough, for the bliss of heaven appears to have a better earnest in the self-sufficient satisfaction of art or poetry than in the shifting concepts of metaphysics or science. The conviction that the gratifying aesthetic is supreme gratifies again. Whether this final gratification is aesthetic, or, in the wide sense, scientific, is easy to ask and hard to answer.

## THE VERB "TO CAUSE"

GERALD ABRAHAMS, M.A.

IF I utter the sentence: Hitler caused the outbreak of the second world war, some interested logician may translate my sentence into the words: Hitler necessitated the outbreak of the second world war. If that translation be made I do not accept it, unless the dragoman makes it clear to me that by the word "necessitate" he means nothing more than I mean by the word "cause." In which case I can dispense with his services. But if he is embodying in his translation the thought that the outbreak of war followed from the existence of Hitler at a given moment of time, as the equality of the angles in a triangle follows from the equality of the sides (I assume that that follows), then I repudiate his translation, because I do not agree that a statement or proposition such as event  $x$  caused event  $y$  is a hypothetical proposition of the type if  $x$  then  $y$ . A fortiori it cannot be regarded by me as a reciprocal hypothetical proposition: if  $x$  then  $y$  if  $y$  then  $x$ ; nor, to complete the possibilities, can I infer what I call the cause from the effect.

The assumption that my interpreter makes—wrongly in my opinion—is the resultant of so many mixed preconceptions that it is hard to classify. The disentanglement and rearrangement of these preconceptions would involve an excursion into the history of philosophy on which I am not anxious to embark. For logical purposes suffice it to say that much philosophy is bound up with the assumption that a causal proposition is a hypothetical proposition.

I think I can see how this error comes into being. Suppose someone sets out to prove (without incurring mishap) that the ignition of a match in certain circumstances will bring about an explosion (I am using these words untechnically) he may state a universal proposition that in every case where fire has been applied to that specific explosive, the latter has exploded; whenever  $x$  we have found  $y$ ; and, for working purposes, that is treated as equivalent to "if  $x$  then  $y$ ." When it is stated in that form, the inquirer finds the proposition of causation acceptable. The next stage, easy but quite unwarrantable, is to treat the hypothetical form as the essence of the causal proposition. Clearly this is not warranted. It may, or may not, be possible to establish a particular causal proposition by relying on a universal causal proposition. But it does not follow that every particular causal proposition is a universal proposition; and if it is not so, then the adoption of the hypothetical form is unjustified.

Going a little further, I would suggest that the principle underlying this reasoning is an inveterate confusion in philosophy and

science between the truth of a proposition and the proof, or the provability, of the truth of a proposition. I venture the suggestion that the philosophy of substance, the philosophy of Conceptual Atomism that displaced it, and the philosophy of Subject-Predicate that some have claimed to replace it, could all be shown by a determined researcher to have been misguided by the reluctance of thinkers to accept unprovable propositions within the scope of truth. A false notion of the importance of self-evidence first enthroned analytic propositions; and the relatively enlightened theorists of coherence still insist on believing in the ultimate derivation of any empirical proposition from a major premise which is the total universe.

The difficulty of proving causal propositions, and the difficulty of dispensing with them, was clear to masters of the philosophy of Empiricism like Francis Bacon and Mill, and those philosophers appear to have established the postulate that science must assume many truths which it cannot prove, as working hypotheses. The modern Empiricists have retreated from this position, not advanced from it. Russell has subjected the notion of causation to a dialectic which disintegrates not only a causal relationship but any relationship that amounts to a continuity between two things, two stages, two phases, or two events. The valuable part of Russell's criticism is, I think, re-stateable as a proposition that causal necessity, whatever it is, is not logical necessity, whatever that is. Subsequent Empiricists have even less place in their systems for causal propositions, because causal propositions are not verifiable, even notionally. I am not aware whether any Empiricist has realized that most propositions whose verb expresses some kind of change are in their nature unverifiable. Does that make all these propositions meaningless to the philosopher? If that is so then surely the philosopher who commits himself to the use of that criterion is limiting his possible interests to a narrow field of arithmetical calculation.

Now if I am right in thinking that a proposition can be true and important without being provable, then I feel justified in asking for the recognition of an empirical causal proposition as a valid causal proposition. To make the particular causal proposition nothing more than a derivative of a universal causal proposition is to commit a *proteron-hysteron*. The universal causal proposition may owe its being to the validity of an infinite number of particular causal propositions. Certainly it owes its recognition to the acceptance of some of them. If there is a necessity in the relationship of a specific cause and a specific effect, I suggest that the necessity is of a specific causal type, and not the kind of necessity that is the characteristic of valid consequence in a hypothetical proposition or judgment. We must, after all, treat the words that we use in philosophy as limited in some way, as to their meanings, by the use that is made of them by ordi-

nary people when they express clear meanings in ordinary life. "I bad to let go because be pushed me." In that sentence somebody is describing what could be described as necessitation, a compulsion, an inevitable result, and is doing so without reference to universal truths. It may be that universal truths embodying the word or notion of necessity are analogical to this experience. If I say that all men are mortal and Socrates is a man, I am compelled by the force of my mental operations, or for shame's sake, to admit that Socrates is mortal. May it not be the case that in some such way the notion of necessity became popular as a description of logical processes. I am not suggesting that the logician's use of the word necessity is a wrong use. I am only suggesting that there can be a notion of empirical necessity which may afford an alternative formulation to an empirical proposition of causation.

The above, however, is not logically necessary for the purposes of my main contention, which is that empirical propositions of causation can be valid, and can be accepted as valid, without being reducible to the hypothetical form.

In everyday life the word is used this way: The indentation on the back of my motor car was caused by the bonnet of an army lorry that pushed into it. Surely I cannot infer the existence of the indentation from the existence of the army lorry, or from the existence of the army lorry at a given place at a given time. I cannot even infer it from the existence of the army lorry in juxtaposition with my motor car because, after all, something different may have happened: the car may have been pushed farther instead of being dented; or, if the molecules had been arranged in a certain pattern, which I am told by scientists is improbable not impossible, the bonnet of the army lorry might have been dented instead of the back of my car. But at the best, it cannot be useful to say that my causal proposition here amounts to nothing more than that the whole universe at a given moment of time was inevitably followed by a phase of the universe in which the back of my motor car was bent. On the other hand, it is useful and practical to say that this lorry caused this indentation by its conduct, without claiming any necessity other than the crude notion of physical necessity which I have described above.

Moreover, if this is a hypothetical proposition, it is surely a curious one, because it ignores the possibility that the indentation could have been otherwise caused. Another vehicle may have bit it; and you can only arrive at logical necessity here by once again invoking the whole universe at a moment of time and laying down the proposition that it followed inevitably from the whole universe at a previous moment.

To revert to the sentence with which I started: Hitler caused the

table on which a great expert, whom he cannot see, is making, over and over again, a particular type of cannon.

*This illustration is not intended, be it understood, as a contribution to theology or to that aspect of philosophy in which theological matters are considered. The point of the illustration is that regularity of sequence, or the existence of a recognizable pattern, can so obsess the scientist or philosopher that he assumes that the whole order of things is stateable in terms of such patterns and regularities. When the philosopher descends to the really base and considers the operation of a particular force of evil, such as Hitler causing the war, he finds himself, so to speak, below his depth. He finds no meaning in the words. But if he is right then a great many people who are using words intelligibly to each other are doing so without justification.*

## DISCUSSION

### "HUMAN KNOWLEDGE—ITS SCOPE AND LIMITS"

Although written primarily for laymen interested in philosophy, this book is not easy reading. The style is light and easy, there is plenty of wit; any general statement is usually followed by some illustration. The layout is clear, and no difficulties are left unexplored. But the problem of determining the scope and limits of human knowledge is complex and difficult, and the apparatus of technical devices which Russell develops for tackling it needs sustained effort to grasp. The book as a whole is like a big factory. It is easy to make a tour of inspection, and get a vague idea of complex processes carefully organized and working efficiently, without really understanding what it is all about; or you can linger over some particular process, and worry it out, while not seeing clearly how it fits in with the rest. You won't get an understanding of the whole of the working parts, and of why they are all there, without putting in a great deal of work yourself. But the book invites this work, and rewards it.

There are six parts. Part I gives a rapid sketch of the present situation in the various sciences. Part II discusses various problems connected with language, on lines already familiar in the *Inquiry*. Part III is concerned fundamentally with the data available for science, and Part IV shows how these data are connected with the concepts and generalizations of science. Part V deals with probability, and Part VI with the postulates needed if science is to be justified.

#### I

The book is limited to a study of (a) what is known without any inference, (b) the inferential knowledge gained by scientists. The limits of knowledge are the limits of scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge is accepted as being the most trustworthy inferential knowledge we possess, and the main questions raised concern it. In what sense is it knowledge? Of what is it knowledge? What must we be able to know without any inference if we are to accept science as knowledge?

Russell puts in the foreground of his discussion one fundamental problem. It is the familiar one presented by science, in its account of the causes of sensation, which shows that each person's sense-experiences depend on conditions within his organized body and especially within his brain, and cannot be taken as resembling anything in the world external to the body.

This conclusion causes trouble if we suppose as some empiricists do that each person's knowledge depends wholly on his sense-experiences together with what can be deduced from them by purely analytical processes. For in this way no inference is possible to anything beyond these sense-experiences. Hume made this clear, and the modern theory of deduction has put it beyond doubt. It follows on a narrow empiricist view not only that sensory qualities cannot be known to belong to the world described by science, but that nothing about this world can be inferred from them, and hence, that nothing can be known about this world at all.

Russell stresses this point. He accepts with the pure empiricist the view

<sup>1</sup> *Human Knowledge—Its Scope and Limits*, by Bertrand Russell (London: Allen & Unwin, 1945. Pp. 335. Price 15s.)



## PHILOSOPHY

that each person's sense-experiences are his only data. But he insists that unless we know some principle which permits inferences from present sense-experiences to something occurring beyond them, we can know nothing beyond the sensations of the present moment. We can know nothing by memory, since our present memories do not logically involve our having had any past experience. We can know nothing of the future, for a similar reason. We can accept nothing on testimony, since we have no principle assuring us of its trustworthiness.

In short, we are left with solipsism of the present moment.

All this is unsatisfactory, and nobody accepts it. Russell claims that we do know the truth of certain principles which make such inferences possible, and that with them science can be justified. These principles are synthetic and not analytic, and they are known without being inferred. The sense in which they are known is different from the sense in which particular facts are known.

Russell's aim then is to show that from (i) the view that sensory data are our only data for knowledge (ii) the view that science is true in some sense, it follows (iii) that we must know certain synthetic principles of inference independently of experience. If we accept (ii) and want to reject (iii) we must reject (i). Personally that is what I should do: but let us follow Russell's account,

### II

Consider first, sensory data. The arguments in favour of their privacy are of two different kinds. The one already mentioned, which depends on the acceptance of science, is the one on which Russell lays special stress, and he adds some variants of it. The other kind is of the Cartesian type, depending on a distinction between what in our experience can be doubted and what cannot. Illusions, imagination, dreams, show that we can be sure that we have certain experiences while being able to doubt whether anything other than our experience exists.

Leaving aside the question of what these arguments amount to, let us see in what sense Russell speaks of experiences as "private." In the first place, what is sensed is not separable from the sensing of it—a sense-experience is a sense-experiencing. In the second place, the word "private" seems to involve that any particular sense-experiencing can form a part of the biography of only one person; and this means that no one can have a direct experience of anyone else's experience. This for Russell is an empirical fact connected with the fact that no two persons have nerves connected with the same sense-organs: though I think that on his theory what is important is also that no two persons have the same brain. But in the third place, it does not follow that no comparison of experiences is possible. If we accept the scientific account of the causes of sensation we can hold that two persons in nearly the same causal circumstances will have nearly the same sense-experiences; and there is no positive ground for supposing that the colour experienced by two persons on a particular occasion cannot be identical (p. 105)—though we cannot show that it is so. The shapes they see can have common geometrical properties. The structural properties of what one man sees—e.g. when he looks at a round plate—may be similar to those of what another man feels when he handles it. And if we consider experiences on a higher level, such as that of understanding the meaning of a sentence, there is no reason for supposing any difference in two persons' understanding of abstract propositions such as those of logic or of mathematics (p. 108).

The experiences of a number of persons can be described as "public" (p. 60)

## DISCUSSION

or "quasi-public" (p. 242) whenever they can be inferred by scientific processes to be similar, and as "private" whenever they can be inferred to be different. "If a fly is crawling on your hand, the visual sensations that it causes are public, but the tickling is private" (p. 59).

### III

All this involves the acceptance of science as having a high degree of credibility. If science is to be credible, we need principles which allow us to proceed from our sense-experiences to the existence of something else. Such principles will be causal principles, by definition. For Russell defines a causal law as "any law which, if true, makes it possible, given a certain number of events, to infer something about one or more other events" (p. 344). The width of this definition should be noted.

It is clear that we do make such inferences long before we reflect on the principles which would justify them. I see a red carpet, and infer that there is a red carpet whether I am seeing it or not. Not all of this can be justified, but under certain conditions I should be justified in concluding that in the physical space and time in which my body occurs there is a set of events forming part of a causal chain resulting in my seeing the red carpet, and that corresponding to every difference in what I see there is a difference in the cause of my seeing. I am not justified in inferring that the cause is red; but if the carpet I see is round, since roundness is a structural characteristic, I can infer a similar structure in the cause (pp. 244-45).

Before discussing the causal principles which justify inferences beyond our sense-experiences, Russell considers at length the differences between perceptual space and time on the one hand (which are themselves public constructions on the common-sense level) and physical space-time on the other, and shows in what way these are co-ordinated. All this is on lines familiar to readers of his earlier books, and I need not dwell on it. What is important is the conclusion that the physical space-time in which we live is not experienced by us, but only inferred. The chair on which I am sitting, the paper on which I am writing, with all their visual and tactual and other sensory qualities, the space I feel round me and the time I live through—all these are part of my experienced world, and this experienced world at any moment is an event in my physical brain, which is located in physical space-time. But when I see and feel my pen in front of me in contact with the paper, the space relations which I infer between the physical causes of my experienced pen, paper, hand and the rest of my experienced body correspond structurally (with certain limitations) to those between the experienced pen, paper, etc.; and it is convenient to construct the inferred space-time in such a way as to make as close a correspondence as possible between the place in my perceptual space where I see and feel my pen and the place in physical space-time in which I infer the physical events which cause my experiences. The experienced date of my experience is not merely co-ordinated with but identified with a date in physical space-time—viz. the date which the scientist would attribute to the event in my physical brain which constitutes my experiencing.

### IV

In his account of the principles needed to justify scientific inference Russell begins by setting aside the familiar principle of induction by simple enumerations. This, he argues, is false as an ultimate principle, though it is helpful when used with safeguards and limitations provided by other principles.

Mere multiplication of instances does not support a generalization which we have no grounds for regarding as having some degree of probability independently of any instances. But if we have grounds of this sort, then multiplication of instances can increase the probability of the inference so as to make it approach certainty. This conclusion he accepts from Keynes. It follows that the principles needed must be principles "which state that generalizations of certain specified kinds are finitely probable before there is any evidence in their favour." (Proceedings of the 10th International Congress of Philosophy, p. 34).<sup>1</sup>

Russell asks what is the smallest number of principles of this kind which must be assumed, if science as we know it is to be validated. He puts forward five, which he has not succeeded in reducing to a smaller number.

Four of these are versions of the familiar principles of substance, cause, continuity and analogy. To them is added what Russell calls a "structural" postulate.

The old principle that all changes are to be referred to permanent substances is rejected. What we call a "thing" is a sequence of neighbouring events which are very similar to their neighbours. The postulate is to the effect that an event is very frequently a member of such a sequence. "Given any event A, it happens very frequently that, at any neighbouring time, there is at some neighbouring place an event very similar to A" (p. 506). This is described as "the postulate of quasi-permanence."

The phrase "it happens very frequently" must be noted. The postulate is not dependent on empirical evidence, though it is intended to be factual (p. 389). It covers events at all times and places and not merely those with which our experiences have been connected. While it wears a certain aspect of modesty in not claiming to say what always happens (as was claimed for instance by those who asserted that whatever happens, happens to substances) yet there lies behind the modesty a staggering confidence in the power of the mind to make concrete statements about events independently of any experience of them.

The second postulate has a similar form and a similar intention. In place of the general principle of causality, it is a postulate about separable causal lines. This is expressed in a very general way. "It is frequently possible to form a series of events such that, from one or two members of the series, something can be inferred as to all the other members" (p. 508). Such a series of events is a separable causal line.

Russell notes that this postulate is involved in the concept of "motion," which requires that something should preserve its identity while changing its position. He states the postulate in another form, whose implications are perhaps less difficult to grasp. "A given event is very frequently one of a series of events . . . which has throughout an approximate law of persistence or change" (p. 509). This brings out more clearly its relation to the first postulate.

At the beginning of his discussion (p. 506) Russell describes *all* the postulates as saying that something happens often but not necessarily always. But the third postulate is not actually expressed in this way. It is to the effect that causal lines must be continuous in space-time. I do not know whether he would insist on this "must," or whether he would interpret it as merely conferring some probability on the generalization that between any two non-contiguous events belonging to the same causal line, there is an event also belonging to this line. Since the postulate only applies to causal lines, which don't always occur, he could insist on the "must," without contradicting his general remark about the postulates.

<sup>1</sup> This article is practically identical with Chapter IX of Part VI.

## DISCUSSION

The fourth postulate, about structure, looks very much like a particular theorem depending on a knowledge of geometry and on empirical facts about separate causal lines. It is the only postulate which mentions structural similarity between the various members of a causal line. If a number of structurally similar complex events are found grouped about a centre, then it usually happens, the postulate says, that they "all belong to causal lines having their origin in an event of the same structure at the centre" (p. 511).

The fact that physical processes do radiate from a centre, with little change of structure, is important for knowledge. If there were no such processes, Russell used to hold, "it would be impossible for different percipients to perceive the same object from different points of view, and we should not have been able to discover that we all live in a common world" (*An Outline of Philosophy*, p. 131) I am inclined to doubt this. The principle has no relevance in regard to experiences of touch, or strain, or to experiences analogous to those gained by looking through a peephole, and if sources of radiation sent out a beam in only one direction, knowledge I think could still have been developed. But it is clear that inter-subjective intercourse is enormously facilitated by multilateral radiation. The point now stressed by Russell is that the scientific conception of an "observer" is one whose use and validity depends on acceptance of the above postulate (p. 481). When similar observers differently situated make the same observations, we need some way of knowing that their observations are all causally related to the same event; and the postulate gives us one fundamental principle for this.

I do not think, however, that this is a sufficient reason for taking the principle as a postulate. The conception of an "observer" changes as science develops, and is itself dependent on provisional knowledge already gained, just as new scientific instruments often depend for their existence and use on previous knowledge (which may itself be modified as the result of their use). So that the fact that certain kinds of observation (I think this is all that could be said) are validated by the use of the principle Russell formulates, does not justify our regarding the principle itself as known independently of experience. It has no significance for observation except for someone who accepts a causal theory of perception; and even as regards vision, the process has not always been regarded as one which proceeded from the object to the observer's eye, but sometimes (as in some early Greek theories) as one proceeding from the observer's eye to the object. The causal theory of perception is an empirical theory. This seems to me a strong argument against accepting the postulate, which is bound up with the causal theory of perception, as basic in Russell's sense. I don't deny its truth as a principle, but I think there is needed considerable knowledge of physical processes before it can be known to be true.

The fifth postulate is that of analogy, and I need not discuss it. There is less difference here between Russell's treatment and the usual treatment, since nobody claims that analogy gives more than probable conclusions.

### V

In explaining how we know these principles, Russell distinguishes between non-inferential knowledge of particular facts and non-inferential knowledge of connections between facts. The former is akin to mirroring, the latter to handling. The former is contemplative, the latter practical (pp. 439-40). The beginnings of this practical knowing are found in what Russell calls "animal inference," which plays an important part in his general account of awareness,

Through conditioning, an animal comes to respond to a stimulus of one sort B, in a way appropriate to a stimulus of another sort A, or to prepare to respond in this way. The smell of a mouse (B) stimulates a cat to watch at a mousehole in readiness for behaviour appropriate to the actual presence of the mouse (A). Russell would describe this by saying that the smell of the mouse gives the cat an "idea" of the mouse. A similar process occurs in human beings, for whom words play an important part in the conditioning. When a person is conditioned so as to tend to be thrown by the hearing of a word into a state of preparation for action appropriate to an object or situation, the word can be said to "mean" this situation for him: it gives him the idea of the situation. Delayed or suspended reactions are important here. A preparation for a delayed reaction may be called a "belief"; and if it is related to actual facts in certain ways it can be called "knowledge."

This is the basis for Russell's account of the way in which the postulates of scientific inference are known. They are not known intuitively, by any method of contemplation. Our animal expectations lead us to generalizations based on experience, not all correct, nor precise, on which we gradually refine. When we reflect on our generalizations we find that they cannot be trusted unless we can trust certain principles which we cannot justify by experience. These principles "are known in the sense that we generalize in accordance with them when we use experience to persuade us of a universal proposition such as 'dogs bark.' As mankind have advanced in intelligence, their inferential habits have come gradually nearer to agreement with the laws of nature which have made these habits, throughout, more often a source of true expectations than of false ones" (p. 526).

Thus, however, would not justify the view that the principles in accordance with which we generalize are known independently of experience. It would rather seem to be an argument in favour of the view that they are validated by our success in using them, so long as we are successful in using them.

## VI

These postulates of scientific inference will be attacked from various sides. From one side they will be regarded as insufficient because they are not universal enough. That was the basis of Kant's attack on Hume. It was a point on which Meyerson laid great stress. Unless the investigator is inflexible in insisting that certain principles must hold universally whether he has evidence for this or not, he will have no ground for feeling constrained to fill in the gaps in his observations in certain ways rather than others; and it is just this constraint, it will be said, which involves him in new problems and makes new advances possible. Russell himself would hold I think that this inflexibility is a useful practical policy but nothing more (cf. p. 56 regarding the physiologist), the critics would reply that it is a necessary practical policy. If one principle hitherto held to be universal comes to be set aside, it must be replaced, they would insist, by a new universal principle; otherwise the scientist will not know what to insist on. That some things are quasi-permanent for a time, will not help a scientist puzzling over the disappearance of something in an experiment: he needs a stronger principle of permanence. Since Russell bases his account on observation of the way in which generalizations are made in animal behaviour, in ordinary common sense, and in the early stages of science, and proceeds to discover by analysis what postulates must be accepted if generalizations of these sorts are to be trusted, this dispute is partly a matter of fact, partly a matter of analysis. I should agree with the objectors that the inflexibility is greater than Russell's postulates would justify, and

## DISCUSSION

with Russell that the universal principles insisted on are not known to be true.

Again, there is something very unsatisfactory about the argument, based on Keynes, to the effect that instances cannot be valid evidence in support of a generalization if there is *not some probability in favour of the generalization* independently of any instances, but can be if there is. Russell discusses this on p. 426 and on p. 452 f. Keynes's discussion is in his *Treatise on Probability*, p. 235 f. Keynes shows that with his assumptions about probability you can prove that *under certain conditions* an increase in the number of favourable instances (with no unfavourable ones) can bring the probability of a generalization near to certainty. Keynes's proof requires that you should be able to give some value (*a*) to the probability relative to non-empirical principles and *independently of any information* about instances, that the generalization is true (*g/h* in Keynes's symbolism) and (*b*) to the probability, independently of any information about instances, but relative to the same non-empirical principles, that a particular instance relevant to the generalization will support it (*x<sub>i</sub>/h*). Now when you are not supposed to know anything about the particular matters with which the generalization is concerned, and not supposed to be in possession of any generalizations already established about any other empirical matters which might help you in this case (as Russell makes clear, p. 453) it seems difficult to see how either of these probabilities could be determined at all. Even admitting the possibility of this, it may be argued, it would require universal non-empirical principles. Russell's non-empirical postulates to the effect that certain types of relation between events frequently happen, would still leave it quite mysterious how from them we could give any probability to the generalization that A's are *always* B's: if we cannot argue from *some* to the probability of *all* on the empirical level, how does bringing in a non-empirical *some* help us?

As a result of these considerations we may conclude that with Russell's postulates it is not even theoretically possible to give a value to either of the probabilities involved in Keynes's proof. If so, the proof fails. But all that follows from this would be the inability to justify induction by simple enumeration on these lines. We are *not* compelled to follow these lines. We can explore other avenues which do not put so great a strain on our credulity. And we need not suppose that the only way to justify induction is to justify induction by simple enumeration.

Here many empiricists would argue that the ordinary discussions of induction lay too great stress on the supposition that we need to *know something* about induction. Russell's new account of knowing goes some way to meet them, since he links it not with mirroring or contemplation but with the way *we behave* when our expectations are fulfilled. But this account is *very incomplete*. An empiricist can admit that we formulate rules for dealing with new cases on the basis of our experience of old cases, and that these rules are often satisfactory. He can admit that the experienced cases do not prove the rules. But he will not admit that we have no justification for using the rules until we have a guarantee of their truth, or even a guaranteed measure of their probability. He will use the rules so long as they lead him to make expectations that are fulfilled; when this no longer happens, he will seek to change them. This is a practical justification for the rules. If a rule has sometimes worked and sometimes failed in the past, he will use the relative frequencies to guide him in using the rule in the future. He may have no theoretical right to do so, but that is what he does. What does Russell add to this? He must begin with rules justified in this practical way. His postulates indeed can be interpreted as merely a set of very wide rules about frequency, gathered by abstraction

## PHILOSOPHY

from an examination of the rules we actually use with success in practice. What does his theory amount to beyond saying that these wide rules are followed in all successful practice, and then concluding that they must be true? Does their truth guarantee anything their success in practice doesn't?

Russell argues that if empiricism as a doctrine were true, it would by its truth prevent the empiricist from knowing it was true, since the doctrine cannot itself be proved empirically. I agree to this, and so could an empiricist. An empiricist need not claim truth in any theoretical sense for his doctrine. He need not put it forward as a propositional thesis at all, but rather as a proposal for adopting a certain set of attitudes to situations, which can be tested in practice by the way in which they lead to fulfilled expectations. But the whole question is too complex to be pursued here.

I have touched on only one of the most fundamental problems of this book, the one which Russell has not dealt with previously in this way. But there are many important discussions which make the book noteworthy. There is no modern epistemological problem which it does not take into account, and with which it does not come to some settlement. In this, and its wide sweep, and the thoroughgoing way in which the various issues are tackled, it has no parallel at the present time.

L. J. RUSSELL.

# PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

## PHILOSOPHY IN GERMANY

Existentialism is one of the most talked of topics of our time and is in danger of being rejected before its implications are understood. I shall discuss what is alive and what is dead in it in another context. Here I can only remark that the German "Philosophy of Existence" should be clearly distinguished from Sartre's "Existentialism," and that considering the movement as a whole first place is due to Karl Jaspers as its originator (in spite of those text-book writers who place him last, contrary to the historical order). A new voluminous book of his, of some 1100 pp., has reached us, *Von der Wahrheit*, the first volume of a *Philosophical Logic*. This book, which is commonly regarded as the most important German philosophical post-war publication, could best be described as "Variations on a Kierkegaardian Theme," namely the theme that "Truth is Subjectivity." This means that what matters is not objective truth of science which abstracts from the existing subject, but subjective truth in which the existing subject remains the centre of interest and truth becomes the same as "true being" (*Wahrsein*). Jaspers' subject is "the clarification of man as a knowing being" (*Erhellung des erkennenden Menschseins*). "The purpose of *Logic*, the clarification of our knowledge-of-truth as it occurs in historical time, is to determine the limits and origin of the meaning of truth." In short, Jaspers attempts to create an existentialist logic. In fact, however, he describes in unending reflection his search for true being or for the Transcendent, which should lead him from a state of unreality and untruthfulness, through an indefinite number of finite possible realizations (*Gestalten*) of truth, to the true reality which should redeem him, but which he does not reach. Details of this reflective search (based on a new metaphysics, the *Philosophie des Umgreifenden*) are most interesting, e.g. the analysis of different forms of knowing, of language, of the category of "exception" etc., but cannot be discussed here. More important to us are the general questions raised by this original attempt. Is it at all possible to combine the subjective principle of "existence" with logic? Shall we have to acknowledge Jaspers' book as a possible new form of logic, comparable to Hegel's *Logic*, but based on a much tamer form of dialectic and replacing Hegel's all-devouring Reason by Kant's finite understanding in its unending search for the Infinite? Or shall we have to say, in order to avoid possible confusion, that this attempt has nothing to do with "logic" in the traditional and strict sense which may be defined, for brevity's sake, as the science of correct reasoning? And shall we add that the conception of an existentialist logic is based on a mistake because it tries to reconcile irreconcilables? I cannot see how this conclusion can be avoided. But even if the book were a failure as a whole we could neglect the rich harvest of its particular analyses only to our own loss. We should say with Goethe: "I love him who desires the Impossible;" and we should never forget that Jaspers' central problem remains the problem of our time, namely, whether within the welfare-state and in the age of mass-production the independent person working out his own destiny is able to survive. Generally speaking, although "philosophies of existence" may be a mistake, "existence" may point to a pressing problem.

Heidegger made a similar impossible attempt, namely to combine



"existence" and ontology. His case is interesting in so far as the principle of existence, through the cunning of the idea, took possession of him and made him play against his own will the role of an existentialist. Because, instead of moving in mere possibilities like Jaspers, he expressed in his pictures of unauthentic and authentic being the true longings of the twenties, he stole the existentialist show from Jaspers; just as Sartre, his follower, stole the show from Marcel. In his newest publication, *Plato's Doctrine of Truth*, to which a *Letter on Humanism* to his French translator is added, he rejects the label "existentialist," Sartre's existentialism and also unfortunately "humanism" as such. He wishes to be regarded as a philosopher of being. He is in fact an archaic primitivist who believes that truth was given in a kind of natural revelation to the early Greek philosopher, as *Unverborgenheit des Seins*. In a penetrating, but rather arbitrary interpretation he tries to show that Plato's allegory of the cave marks the transition from this original meaning of truth to its interpretation as correspondence between thought and reality.

In another volume of the same collection<sup>1</sup> Thure von Uexküll,<sup>2</sup> a son of the famous biologist, discussing "the phenomenal world and the reality of exact science" defends the thesis that our real life consists in the appearance and disappearance of illusions (*Wahn*) and illusive worlds, and that the concrete character of our sense experience is based on these *Wahnwelten*. This rather paradoxical and provocative thesis sounds like a *post factum* metaphysical justification of the Ajax-like madness of the Germans in the Third Reich.

Hermann L. Goldschmidt's *Philosophie als Dialogik* (Aehren Verlag, Affoltern a.A.) is valuable because it describes the origin and development of a movement which interprets philosophy essentially as a dialogue, a standpoint best known in this country through Buber's publications. He begins with Feuerbach, but Hamann, Herder, Jacobi, and Wilhelm v. Humboldt started the movement. He tries to rediscover what was first discovered by Feuerbach, and a second time by Ehner, Buber, Gogarten, Grisebach, and Guardini.

Mario Pensa's book *Das Deutsche Denken, Untersuchung über die Grundformen der deutschen Philosophie* (Eugen Rentsch, Zurich, fr. 12) gives a survey of the history of German philosophy on the assumption that "the German Ego, i.e. the transcendental Ego," represents a stage of consciousness, in which Mind and Nature, Subject and Object, are not yet separated. This hypothesis allows him to give a correct account of certain phenomena, e.g. Schelling's philosophy, but ought to be replaced by the more general hypothesis that the German mind is indeterminate (cf. *The Hibbert Journal*, 1940, pp. 216 ff.). Jaspers e.g. wants to keep open to himself all possibilities, including the extremes of the absolute "no" (nihilism) and absolute "yes" (ideism). That has nothing to do with the subject-object identity. Max Ladner's *Gotamo Buddha* (Rascher, Zurich, fr. 20), may be mentioned as a popular, but remarkably well-documented attempt to re-interpret Buddha's message, especially the thesis of individual responsibility, for people living in an age of mass-civilization.

The History of Philosophy is represented by the following books. Robert Heiss' *Der Gang des Geistes* (Francke, Bern, fr. 13 80) is a popular history of modern thought from Descartes to the present time. Written in a lively style it depends on Hegel's interpretation whose depth, method, and mastery of the whole material are, however, missing. One looks in vain for Berkeley,

<sup>1</sup> *Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit*, Francke, Bern, fr. 7.50.

<sup>2</sup> Th. v. Uexküll und E. Grassi, *Wirklichkeit als Geheimnis und Auftrag*, Francke, Bern, fr. 6.80.

## PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

Peirce, Moore, Alexander, Russell, Whitehead, Herder, Jacobi, Humboldt, Jaspers, Heidegger, Marcel, Boole, and Symbolic Logic. One finds instead an interpretation of the whole development of the modern mind as "a continuous *Entgrenzung* (losing of definite shape) of the world, of knowledge, and of man." A scholarly book in the best German tradition, the result of a lifetime of research, is Max Pohlenz' *Die Stoa, Geschichte einer geistigen Bewegung*. (Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, Göttingen, Vol. I, DM. 23; Vol. II, DM. 20.) The first volume gives in a simple and noble language a complete and most sympathetic history of Stoicism from Zeno to Marcus Aurelius, discusses in *extenso* its influence on Jewish Alexandrian philosophy, on Neoplatonism, and on Christian theology up to St. Augustin, and in a few pages its repercussions in the modern era up to Kant. It contains most valuable indices referring also to the second volume which adds bibliographical notes and references confirming the interpretation of the text. It is interesting to note that Pohlenz believes that Zenon, the founder of the school, was a full-blooded Semite, namely a Phoenician. Although this and other points, like the treatment of Posidonius, may be open to discussion, the analysis seems generally to be fair and objective; this can be said, e.g. of the discussion of Plotinus although this is based almost exclusively on German publications, whereas English papers with immediate reference to the problem under discussion are neglected (such as R. E. Witt's papers on "Plotinus and Posidonius" and "The Plotinian Logos and its Stoic Basis" in *The Classical Quarterly*, Vols XXIV, XXV). This is a work which should be in all University libraries and in the hands of all students of the subject.

R. M. Meyer's *Leibniz und die Europäische Ordnungskrise* (Hansischer Gildenverlag, DM. 9.80) goes back to Leibniz' attitude, as a critical and responsible thinker to the crisis of his time, taking him as a possible guide in our present trouble. This may be excellent from a German point of view. Generally speaking, however, is it sufficient to translate the well-known "essential" characterization of Leibniz' thought as *Universalmathematik und Individualmetaphysik* into the "existential" formula *universale Teilnahme und kritische Selbstbesinnung* (universal sympathy and critical self-reflection), and to base on it a new interpretation of the whole of Leibniz' life and work? The result is a queer mixture of biography, history, and philosophy, disappointing as a whole, but containing valuable details (e.g. the survey of former Leibniz-interpretations) Gaston Grua's new edition of *Textes Inédits de Leibniz* brings new material of great importance for the problems discussed in this book. Miss Aebi's bulky book, *Kant's Begründung der Deutschen Philosophie* (Verlag f. Recht u. Gesellschaft, Basel, fr. 40) achieves an astounding feat. "No one of Kant's pupils or interpreters understood him, except one," is her thesis, "and this one, namely herself," one has to add, "misunderstood him." Attacking Kant from a logical positivist point of view she claims that the transcendental deduction of the categories is based on a *quatermo terminorum*, caused by a confusion of the idea of the Ego with the idea of the objective unity of apperception. But is it? Might not the confusion perhaps belong to the interpreter's mind? After nearly 500 pages of discussion the refrain returns "Nothing remains" (i.e. of Kant) except Miss Aebi, indeed a comforting result! By contrast H. Hinderks' *Über die Gegenstandsbegriffe in der Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Haus zum Falken, Basel, fr. 12) tries in a modest, sober and objective analysis to distinguish five meanings of "object" in the Critique of Pure Reason, viz., (1) thing in itself, (2) transcendental object, (3) appearance, (4) the known object, and (5) the Noumenon in its negative function.

Very useful and valuable are the *Bibliographical Introductions to the Study*

## PHILOSOPHY

of *Philosophy*<sup>1</sup> edited by Prof. I. M. Bochenski, eleven numbers of which have so far reached us. They are invaluable for the student of these specific subjects because they bring the essential titles with short critical notes. Prof. Dürr's bibliography of Logical Positivism may be of special interest to our readers. It reports chiefly on German publications and confirms the decline of this movement which has lost with Otto Neurath its driving power. Neurath was not only the chief organizer of the Unity-of-Science Congresses, but he was in a certain sense the manager of the Journal *Erkenntnis*. He achieved the rare feat of finding a Dutch publisher who not only published a philosophical periodical, but who paid for the permission to publish it. For this reason Neurath declined American offers for the continuation of the Journal during the war, with the result that *Erkenntnis* no longer exists.

Among reprints first place is due to *Max Planck in seinen Akademie-Ansprachen*, published by the German Academy of Science (Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, DM. 8.75). They contain Planck's addresses delivered at the Berlin Academy of Science, and are of great interest to the student of science and philosophy. Einstein's, v. Laue's and Schrödinger's inaugural speeches, together with Planck's replies, represent a discussion illustrating important progress in contemporary physics. A complete bibliography of Planck's publications is added. A reprint from Moritz Schlick's Collected papers under the title *Gesetz, Kausalität u. Wahrscheinlichkeit* (Gerold, Wien, \$1.45) may be of value to students interested in the problems of causality, probability, and law. The same author's *Grundzüge der Naturphilosophie* (Gerold, Wien, \$1.45) is not identical with his *Naturphilosophie*, published in Dessoir's *Lehrbuch der Philosophie*, 1925, but adds a few chapters of it to an unpublished lecture. It defines *Naturphilosophie* as "the interpretation of the meaning of scientific propositions" and believes that physics arises through the co-operation of ingenious guessing and exact measurement.

An astonishing number of new German philosophical Journals are appearing. The *Zeitschrift für Philosophische Forschung* maintains its high standard of objectivity and not the least valuable part is its comprehensive reviews of new German publications. The *Archiv für Philosophie*, 2 (W. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart) contains an interesting paper by C. F. von Weizsäcker on Natural Law and Theodicy, with special reference to Leibniz. The publication of the *Philosophische Studien* in blockaded Berlin represents a victory of mind over matter on which the editor, Prof. A. Werner, and the publishers, de Gruyter & Co., ought to be congratulated. They start with a paper by Prof. Leisegang about Kant and Mysticism, in which he tries to show that Kant's interpretation of moral phenomena is akin to that mystical theory which assumes that God has sown the seed of goodness into human nature. In the Catholic *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, Vol. 59, 1, is published a paper on Plato's lecture on the Good by Paul Wilpert who tries to reconstruct it on the basis of recently found fragments.

Grillparzer's prophecy that the German development would lead from humanity through nationalism to bestiality, is quoted by two authors. Prof. Aloys Wenzl, Rector of the University of Munich, in discussing the German spiritual development during the last fifty years, including the Third Reich, concludes that its direction ought to be reversed, and that the return to humanity ought to mean a return to God, i.e. to Christianity (*Die geistigen*

<sup>1</sup> *Bibliographische Einführungen in das Studium der Philosophie*. 1. *Allgemeine Philosophische Bibliographie*. 2. *Amerikanische Philosophie*. 3. *Symbolische Logik und Grundlegung der exakten Wissenschaften*. 4. *Kierkegaard*. 5. *Antike Philosophie*. 6. *Arabische Philosophie*. 7. *Italienische Philosophie der Gegenwart*. 8. *Aristoteles*. 9. *Französische Existenzphilosophie*. 10. *Augustinus*. 11. *Der logische Positivismus*. Francke, Bern, fr. 2.80 each; but 5, 6, 8 fr. 3.80 each.

## PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

*Strömungen unseres Jahrhunderts*, Münchner Vlg. DM. 4.80). Prof. Gustav Radbruch in his memorable lectures *Vorschule der Rechtsphilosophie* (Vlg. Scherer, Heidelberg, DM. 5.70) reaches a similar result. He is one of the few Germans who have the courage of saying the truth even if it is not popular. He makes an important contribution to the discussion of law and justice. He shows conclusively the absurdity of defining law as the command of the sovereign (Hobbes). The "lawful injustice" brought about by Hitler's commands and laws makes it clear that a standard is required on the basis of which these laws may be declared to be unjust. It therefore comes about that after a century of positivist theories of law Prof. Radbruch returns to the idea of a law transcending the laws of particular states. Whether one calls this law Divine Law, Natural Law, or Law of Reason, does not matter. Spiritually this is a remarkable event. But it remains to be seen whether his compatriots will follow his lead or whether they will go on reprinting books of the Nazi era.

F. H. HEINEMANN.

## NEW BOOKS

*Decadence. A Philosophical Enquiry.* By C. E. M. JOAD. (London: Faber & Faber. 1948. Pp. 430. Price 12s. 6d.)

Dr. Joad is the latest deserter from humanism, the latest to join the flight from reality to Reality. He figures, to be sure, a little oddly among the other refugees; his baggage-cart contains items—a pianola and a dozen or two of Burgundy—which you will scarcely find among theirs. And perhaps his complaint is a little different as well. Certainly he insists on the necessity of recognizing the existence and claims of the other, the non-natural, order of being, if humanity is to escape spiritual (and perhaps also physical) destruction; and in the failure of this recognition finds "the essence" of decadence. But the note of personal frustration and bitterness so clearly audible in the writing of Mr. Huxley, and the note of renunciation so strongly and delicately sounded by Mr. Eliot—two authors whom Dr. Joad cites with approval—are absent from his own work. Dr. Joad's turning towards the non-natural order is not also a turning away from the natural. Rather, he wants the best of both: wants his human tastes and attitudes to be transcendently endorsed, non-naturally underwritten (and, perhaps, at the same time, gently chastened and corrected). Why does he feel this need? It would be indelicate (he would say, irrelevant) to enquire. But in part he gives the answer himself, in depicting those gloomier aspects of contemporary civilization which imperil the values he cherishes. Who, or what, shall protect them? Man's nature, he says truly, "contains no necessary assurance of increasing reasonableness and righteousness" (p. 419). But "necessary assurance" is what he wants. If salvation won't come from within, it must come "from outside"; from a divinity which is transcendent (and thus exempt from the operation of the second law of thermo-dynamics), and whose purposes are "expressed" in elements of value, themselves belonging to the non natural order, but partially "manifested" in the natural order in music, painting and decent behaviour.

Perhaps it is unfair to lay too much stress on what the author himself calls the "theistic hypothesis." Dr. Joad's main concern is with the "non-natural world of objective value", his main purpose, not to comfort, but to warn. His central thesis is the empirical, indeed historical, contention that there is a persistent connection between poverty of spiritual experience on the one hand, and the rejection of the metaphysical belief in an objective scale of values, the "failure to acknowledge the non-human elements of value and deity to which the human is subject" (p. 15), on the other. His procedure, not very consistently adhered to, is to *define* "decadence" as "the refusal to recognize" these elements; and then to endeavour to show that this refusal will naturally lead to spiritual impoverishment, to social and individual patterns of behaviour such as we should normally agree to call "decadent." "Spiritual experiences" (pp. 255-58) are aesthetic, intellectual, moral, religious. They are, in fact, the experiences in which we make contact with the non-natural order. (The artist opens a window on Reality.) So the thesis is that if we reject this *description* of such experiences, we forfeit the experiences themselves. The price of enjoyment is submission. The penalty of intellectual rebellion is spiritual privation. You may walk in the garden so long as you do your metaphysical obeisance to its presiding spirits; but if pride leads you to fancy it your own, you will be harried out into the wilderness by the angry angels.

## NEW BOOKS

One thinks: what a difficult thesis, historically, to maintain, if "spiritual experiences" is to be given so very comprehensive a meaning. Is it clear that all Joad's spiritual goods are complementary? It would be easier to urge, as Joad himself seems at times to do, the not incompatible view that intensity and richness of experience, and fineness of discrimination, tend themselves to lead to the Protagorean position he deplures. If both theses are true, what a dreary alternation we are faced with. We can never be secure in enjoyment of the garden: for the condition of undisturbed occupation is that we should remain unappreciative of its possibilities. Here Joad's refusal to renounce, his wide interpretation of "spiritual," his desire to have the best of both worlds, come home to roost. The dilemma can be illustrated by one of Joad's own examples. On p. 12, he cites Alberti as a representative mouthpiece of the subversive (decadent) metaphysics against which he warns us; on p. 352 he instances the same man as a supreme example of spiritual richness and versatility (non-decadence). Perhaps Joad would embrace the difficulty, and say that our overriding problem is to combine increasing acquaintance with spiritual goods with undiminished recognition of their true (non-natural) character; to be familiar without being disrespectful. But it seems odd that, so far, the better we have known them (or, at least, those of them on which Joad lays most emphasis), the more likely we have been to make a quite fundamental mistake about their nature.

But really Dr. Joad is not much concerned with producing historical evidence. His method of argument is more *a priori*: consists in running up and down logical ladders of which the following four-runged one is a fair specimen:

I have a purpose.  
I am here for a purpose.  
There is a purpose in the universe  
The universe has a purpose.

The illusion is created that the steps between the rungs are demonstrative: if you deny, or question the meaning of, the fourth proposition, you will find yourself denying or questioning the meaning of the first; and so leading a purposeless life. A similar sort of *a priori* argument is used to show that those who deny, or question the significance of the assertion of, a non-natural order, will in fact prefer one experience to another solely on the ground that it yields more intense sensuous gratification; and thus will tend to lose the capacity for more valuable kinds of experience. The steps of the demonstration do not matter. What matters, I think, is the *kind* of argument employed. One is inclined to say that its demonstrative appearance is plainly fraudulent, unless a man's metaphysics is to be regarded as a matter, not of what he says, but entirely of what he does; in which case the demonstration would be impeccable, but uninteresting. In any case, it is plainly the connection between the saying and the doing that interests Dr. Joad; but he feels it to be so intimate that he must join metaphysics and behaviour with quasi-demonstrative links. The connection is empirical, then; but personal; felt, not observed. And so, in spite of his protests, we shall read his book neither as an example of the plain, historical, nor of the strict, analytic, method; but as the expression of a need, as the symptom of a fairly widespread, but not universal, condition.

P. F. STRAWSON.

*Natural Philosophy through the Eighteenth Century and Allied Topics.* Commemoration Number to mark the 150th Anniversary of the foundation of the Magazine, edited by Allan Ferguson. (London: Taylor & Francis Ltd. 1948. Pp. vii, 164. Price 15s.)

It was a happy thought when Professor Allan Ferguson decided to commemorate the 150th anniversary of *The Philosophical Magazine* by asking a number of experts in the various physical sciences and in engineering to write a series of essays on the state and development of their respective disciplines in the hundred years preceding the first appearance of the magazine in 1798. Unlike most of the great research journals of today which are devoted to the physical sciences, *The Philosophical Magazine* is independently owned and is not the organ of any institution or scientific body. Like that unique weekly, *Nature*, which we owe to the magnanimous foresight of the publishers Macmillan, it owes its continued existence to the firm of Taylor and Francis. But the relationship in this case must surely be unique; for the owners are both the printers and the publishers, and the history of the firm is inextricably interwoven with the history of the magazine. It is singularly appropriate that the preface to this commemoration number should be written by the chairman of Taylor and Francis.

In the subsequent chapters, Allan Ferguson and John Ferguson provide a short history of the periodical, including a selection of interesting and curious titles of articles in the earlier volumes, the Astronomer Royal writes on astronomy, Professor Dingle on physics, Professor Partington on chemistry and Dr. J. F. Scott on mathematics in the eighteenth century. Engineer-Captain Edgar C. Smith, R.N., gives an account of engineering and invention and Dr. R. S. Whipple describes scientific instruments in that age. The three concluding essays include two by Dr. McKie, one on the evolution of the scientific periodical from 1665 to 1798 and the other on scientific societies; the final essay by Dr. F. Sherwood Taylor is on the teaching of the physical sciences at the end of the eighteenth century.

Together, these essays provide a comprehensive survey of scientific opinion in the Age of Reason, and the various authors must be congratulated on the highly competent manner in which they have summarized the state of their respective sciences in that period. Indeed, most if not all of these essays can be read with profit and understanding by the intelligent layman.

In the pure sciences the eighteenth century was mainly a period in which classical mathematics and dynamics were welded into the form with which every undergraduate is now familiar. Although in the last decades of the century chemistry found its Newton in Lavoisier, the Age of Reason cannot compare with either the preceding or the subsequent century for intellectual excitement. The astonishing novelty of thought, so characteristic of the great men of science of the seventeenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries is missing. This is not to say that the age was totally lacking in new ideas, but Lavoisier founded modern chemistry by introducing the quantitative methods of physics, and, for all his greatness as an observer, Herschel, in founding modern sidereal astronomy, produced no idea so startlingly new as Galileo or Newton had done before him, or as Faraday, Maxwell, Rutherford, Planck and Einstein were to produce later. Even Dalton's extremely important atomic theory was not remarkable for its essential novelty.

The eighteenth century was an age of techniques rather than of new philosophical conceptions. The techniques of the differential and integral calculus, of telescope construction and of the balance in chemistry are the counterparts in pure science of the remarkable inventions of the engineers which, occurring

in rapid succession, brought about the Industrial Revolution. In fact, it was mainly through engineering that the eighteenth century students of Nature made their greatest contribution to *changing* the lives and minds of men. On the other hand, as the result of many years of ingenious and difficult calculation, the typical result achieved in pure science was the grand theorem due to Lagrange and Laplace establishing the *stability* of the solar system.

Indeed, in the ancient sciences of mathematics and astronomy the great work of the century was the consolidation of the ground won by Newton and Leibniz; whereas, in the new sciences of physics and chemistry the high tide of discovery had barely set in when the century ended. In marked contrast to our own age, although the most influential men of "action" were the great inventors and engineers, the Watts and the Arkwrights, the outstanding thinker was a professional philosopher, Immanuel Kant.

G. J. WHITROW.

✓ *The Experimental Situation in Psychical Research.* By S. G. SOAL. (London: The Society of Psychical Research, 1947. Pp 63. Price 2s.)

This, the ninth Myers Memorial Lecture, is a useful summary of the experimental work done in Psychical Research up to date together with some suggestions for further procedure. In Part I, Mr. Soal presents a review of the situation. After carefully explaining the difference between controlled and uncontrolled experiment and a preliminary discussion of interpretation, he gives a description and a summary of the results of experimental work in card-guessing, psychometry and psychokinesis. He discusses his own results and those of Rhine, Hettinger, Whately Carington and others. He is, perhaps rightly, somewhat critical of some of the American procedures and sceptical of some of the American results. He is particularly doubtful about Rhine's P.K. work. While a cautious approach to this subject is undoubtedly desirable, his criticism (pp 15-16) does not seem to allow sufficiently for Rhine's argument that the decline in rate of scoring during the run is a characteristically psychological effect, similar to that observed in card-guessing experiments.

Part II contains an account of Mr. Soal's recent experiments with Mrs. Stewart, obviously a model of what experiments in Psychical Research should be. In the course of his observations Mr. Soal makes two very sound recommendations. (1) That experiments should be really *experimental*, i.e. that conditions should be varied as much as possible in order to isolate the factors necessary for success. An illustration of this procedure is afforded by his own work, especially by the ingenious experiment which seems to provide conclusive evidence for the telepathy, as opposed to the clairvoyance explanation of his results (Section 40).

The description is throughout easy to follow and the results are presented with great candour and clarity. My only regret concerns the use of the expression, "Odds against chance," which, although it now seems to be traditional in giving numerical assessment of the significance of results, must be misleading to the general reader. What seems to be meant is "odds against the result of the hypothesis of chance."

The lecture is certainly to be recommended to readers of PHILOSOPHY who wish to assess and interpret for themselves the most clearly authentic evidence for paranormal cognition. A number of photographs of experiments and apparatus and a bibliography of relevant material add to the interest and usefulness of the pamphlet.

MARTHA KNEALE.



## PHILOSOPHY

✓ *Hobhouse Memorial Lectures 1930-1940.* (London: Oxford University Press. 1948. Price 10s. 6d. net.)

By the terms of the Hobhouse Memorial Trust, all these lectures had to be published shortly after their delivery; and no doubt many of them will already be familiar to readers of this Journal. But it is convenient and appropriate that they should be bound together in one volume; and the Oxford Press are to be congratulated on making them available in that form.

As might be expected most of the lectures are concerned with the social and political topics with which Hobhouse was mainly occupied; but there are two of more general interest. In the 1931 lecture on *The Absurdity of any Mind-Body Relation*, C. S. Myers offered a powerful plea for the view that there is no real distinction between the mind and the living body and therefore no possibility of relation between them; and in 1936 Dawes Hicks, under the title of *Thought and Real Existence*, dealt with some of the fundamental problems concerning our knowledge of the world. Though developed in close relation to the views of Hobhouse and Lotze, his argument is not without bearing on recent discussions, and many readers will welcome his insistence that some kind of thinking is involved in all awareness and his attempt to develop a realist theory of perception for which sensations and sense-data have no objective status.

Moreover, the lectures on social and political topics are by no means devoid of the philosophical quality which characterized Hobhouse's interest in such matters. This is often obvious from their titles; for example, we have J. A. Hobson on *Towards Social Equality* (1930); Professor Ginsberg on *The Unity of Manhood* (1935); and Professor Lasd on *The Decline of Liberalism* (1940). Even those with less promising titles, like J. L. Hammond's on *The Growth of Common Enjoyment* (1932) and Professor Tawney's on *Some Aspects of the Economics of Public Education* (1938), contain much matter of genuine philosophical interest. But from this point of view the most interesting contributions are probably K. Mannheim's on *Rational and Irrational Elements in Contemporary Society* (1934); Stocks' on *Materialism in Politics* (1937) and Professor Toynbee's on *The Downfalls of Civilisations* (1939). Professor Toynbee puts forward his familiar thesis that civilizations are destroyed by their own defects rather than by external causes; Mannheim develops a suggestive and characteristic distinction between the rationality which consists in genuine thinking and that which consists only in adaptation of means to ends; and Stocks, in what to many readers will seem the most interesting lecture of the whole volume, suggests that matter is most appropriately regarded, not (as by Descartes) as the opposite of mind or spirit, but rather (as by Aristotle) as the opposite of form, and that the main error of our time, fundamental in Marxist theory as well as in certain interpretations of democracy deriving from Rousseau, is the belief that it can create its own form.

Yet it is not only because of the interesting material which it contains that the book is to be welcomed. It is perhaps of even greater significance as a tribute to the memory of Hobhouse and as a testimony to the width of his interests and the extent of his achievements. Psychologists, Sociologists, Philosophers, Historians and Economists all pay tribute to his achievement in their own studies; and to complete the picture there would have to be further tributes to his by no means inconsiderable activities as a journalist and in practical affairs. Certainly the reader of these lectures cannot fail to be impressed by his eminence as a philosopher; and it is difficult not to ask oneself whether it would not have been more widely recognized if he had not been eminent in so many other spheres at the same time.

O. DE SELINCOURT.

## NEW BOOKS

*Essays on Primitivism and related ideas in the Middle Ages.* By GEORGE BOAS.  
(Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1948. Pp. xii + 227. \$4.50.)

In 1935 the present author, with Professor A. O. Lovejoy, produced the first volume of *A Documentary History of Primitivism*. The whole work was to comprise four volumes, giving extensive quotations in Greek and Latin, with English translations and comments and analyses. This first volume dealt with "the golden age" in Hesiod and his followers, with the cult of the simple life among the Cynics and Stoics, and the reaction against it, and with the idea of the noble savage, real and imaginary, during the classical period.

Owing to the war the second volume, on the medieval period, has had to be replaced by a more modest "Contribution" from Professor Boas alone, though the original format is retained. Apart from Philo and Maimonides, it deals with Christian writers only, beginning with Theophilus and Tertullian in the second century and extending as far as Abelard, St. Bernard and Hugh of St. Victor in the twelfth. The quotations are given in English, but with full references. The arrangement is partly chronological, and partly by subjects; after an initial essay on Philo, the main body of the book is arranged round the scheme of subjects adopted in the first volume.

We begin, then, with the idea of a golden age in the past, now transformed into the state of innocence enjoyed by Adam before the Fall. The outline is that of Genesis 1-3, but pagan legends are freely used to supplement it. The early Fathers mostly think of Adam as simple and childlike, occupied but not wearied in cultivating Eden. Stoic conceptions come in with Gregory of Nyssa: Adam is not only free from bodily needs, but from all passions and physical necessities whatsoever. Augustine endows him with a full physical nature, not excluding sexuality; but his physical functions are perfectly subject to rational will.

Later writers carry on the Augustinian tradition, but with various and sometimes fantastic additions. Adam not only enjoys "the splendor of innocence," but all the delights of the senses, he has a sanguine temperament and a musical voice. Others (e.g. Maimonides) endow him with perfect reason as well.

A further essay deals with Christian versions of the Life according to Nature. Christians follow St. Paul (e.g. 1 Cor. xi) in appealing to the law of nature as a guide to right living. Christian ascetics cultivate the simple life. Yet anti-intellectualism, which is apt to go with asceticism, never really captured the Christian tradition, despite the well-known passages in Tertullian and St. Bernard. (No reason is given for this, it might have been useful to mention the Benedictine insistence on study as a powerful corrective.)

As a whole, the early Christian writers have no respect for savages as such, though they occasionally quote them as shame the vices of the civilized. But the classical idea of the virtuous Hyperboreans crept back into Christianity as pagan learning revived. The legends of Alexander the Great also directed attention towards the East, and the Brahmins were portrayed as virtuous ascetics from the fourth century onwards. A similar mixture of fact and legend is seen in the Christian lore of the Earthly Paradise, in the voyages of St. Brendan and the country of Prester John.

On the other hand Christianity could not adopt the pagan philosophy of history, either as a mere process of degeneration, or in the Stoic conception of recurrent cycles. Its thought was dominated by the two crises of the Fall and the Redemption; and in some sense the history of the Church had to be interpreted as a recovery, or even as a progress, though there was no consistent doctrine of the ideal State or of the new age to come. Various attempts to

deal with these problems are discussed in the two concluding essays on Antiprimitivism and on Joachim of Florus.

The method of presentation adopted here has certain drawbacks. One is constantly beginning anew; indeed the essay on Christianity and Cynicism has no less than three chronological sketches in 40 pages, following the divisions of its subject-matter. Perhaps it would have been difficult to reduce the whole book to a single historical outline; yet this was achieved, for instance, by Bishop Kirk in *The Vision of God*.

To my mind, also, there are too many "isms." "The Golden Age" is disguised as "Chronological Primitivism." "Geographical Primitivism" conceals "The Fortunate Islands." "Hard Primitivism" and "Soft Primitivism" seem uncouth designations for the two ideals of frugality and innocent luxury. And need we use "Animalitarianism" to denote the cult of "the Happy Beast"?

However, this book is a gold-mine for the student of medieval thought, or for the amateur inquirer on the track of Prester John or the voyage of Maeldune. And one must be grateful for a collection which gives the sources (in Lactantius) of that distinction between Innocence and Virtue which was the inspiration of Milton's *Areopagitica* (not to speak of Fichte and Hegel) and has been so cunningly satyrized by Mgr. Knox.

As far as one can judge without extensive checking, the detail is fairly, but only fairly, accurate. Two pages on St Basil, chosen as a sample, disclosed three errors. Dr. W. K. L. Clarke is misspelt on p. 31 n. 43, and in the Index (whereas the correctly-spelt reference on p. 111 is not indexed). On p. 32 n. 48 read "Hom I, 3, 4" (not "1"), and "p. 168" in Migne (not "108"). On p. 33 n. 52 read "p. 105-6," not "p. 1053."

O. Bardenhewer published at Freiburg (both misspelt on p. 199, and in the Index). On p. 180 the reference to Tao in Migne is p. 853 (not 362). Cosmas Indicopleustes is misspelt on p. 129 n. 1 and this reference not indexed. Small printer's errors occur at p. 84 l. 47 and 87 l. 4, 115 n. 75 (Basil's), 116 l. 25, and 225 (Fotheringham, J. K.), while the heading on p. 121 should be "3," not "c." And I fear this list could be extended.

G. C. STREAD.

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*Philosopher's Quest*. By IRWIN EDMAN. (New York: The Viking Press; London: Macmillan & Co. 1947. Pp. 275. Price 15s. net.)

The most accurate description of this book would be "an introduction to philosophy." But that might also be very misleading. For it is not the usual kind of introduction. There is no attempt to survey the main provinces of philosophy, or to give a systematic account of the problems which arise in various fields and the way they have been tackled in the past. There is little history of philosophy as normally understood nor any summaries of the main views of philosophers today. Professor Edman attempts something much more helpful and ambitious, namely to give an impression of what real philosophical thinking is like, and to do so at a level which can be appreciated by the beginner or the layman. His method is largely that of "images, episodes and soliloquies"; and he is obviously as much a master of these literary modes as he is a discerning critic of philosophy. It would defeat just the purpose which the author has in mind, as well as being peculiarly difficult from the nature of his method, to attempt any summary of his own book. The most that I think should be said in indication of the author's own allegiances which, in spite of himself, he does not quite manage to conceal, is that he favours the humanistic pragmatism of which there is such a distinguished

## PHILOSOPHY

Franciscan Institute Publications; Philosophy Series; The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, N.Y.:

*The Tractatus de Successibus*, attributed to WILLIAM OF OCKHAM.

*The Tractatus de Praedestinatione et de Praescientia Dei et de Futuris Contingentibus*, edited by PHILOTHEUS BOEHNER, O.F.M.

*The Transcendentals and their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus*, by ALLAN B. WOLTER, O.F.M., Ph.D.

*Intuitive Cognition, A Key to the Significance of the Later Scholastics*, by SEBASTIAN J. DAY, O.F.M., Ph.D.

The publication of these four volumes of which the first appeared in 1944 and the last in 1947 bears eloquent testimony to the revival of the Franciscan school of philosophy, a revival so magnificently inaugurated by the Quaracchi editions of the writings of the great Franciscan thinkers. Those familiar with the works of Scotus know already how important a part he played in the history of Scholastic thought, although the great name of Aquinas has inevitably emphasized the part played by Dominicans in the construction of the system of the Schoolmen. The truth is, of course, that there was never a time when Scholasticism stood for any single coherent body of doctrine, incapable of addition or development, and although Thomism and Neo-Thomism are generally accepted as representing the orthodox Catholic tradition, there is a growing body of evidence to suggest that such a view is far too one-sided and unrepresentative.

Fr. Boehner's two volumes are mainly, as their titles imply, editions of the texts referred to; the former containing a valuable summary of the evidence for a life of Ockham, the latter containing an appendix showing how Ockham dealt with the already existing three-value logic and had the beginnings of a symbolic logic. The editing of the texts is competently done, with a useful apparatus criticus, whilst Fr. Boehner's wide knowledge of modern logical theories is evident from his treatment of Ockham's ideas on the subject.

The third and fourth of the volumes under discussion will provide most of the interest for the ordinary philosopher who has no specialized interest in the Schoolmen. The title of the third is sufficient indication of its contents, though it affords no hint of the thoroughness of the treatment and the wide range of knowledge and acuteness of perception of the author. For those to whom metaphysics is mere nonsense the whole work will, of course, be so much waste of time, but fortunately there will be many who will find in this serene atmosphere something to brace and stimulate. Not all may feel the necessity for the analytical detail in which Scotus loves to indulge, but they cannot doubt that he is dealing with something very real and very important. For, as he says himself, "it is necessary that there should be some universal science which is devoted to a consideration of these transcendentals" and in the history of the development of the science of metaphysics no thinkers have played a more important part than the Schoolmen. It may well be that, because of the bankruptcy of much modern philosophizing men will return to a more appreciative attitude towards that school. "For so long as metaphysics stays in the real order, though it begins with the notion of being *qua* being, it will invariably end with the notion of God. It cannot analyse the notion of contingency save in terms of necessity, or the relative without introducing the absolute, or order without primacy."

Lastly we come to Fr. Day's important work on "Intuitive Cognition." Here the sphere of debate is between the Thomist view of intellectual cognition as purely abstractive and the Scotist, developed by Ockham, which claimed that an intuitive element is to be found in intellectual cognition;

## NEW BOOKS

otherwise how explain the knowledge of individuals as such and the truth of propositions concerned with contingent beings? The purpose of the volume is not merely to shed light on the activity of knowing but also to show that the fourteenth century is not a time of decadence as it is too often thought to be. And Fr. Day makes out a very good case.

Altogether then these volumes are to be commended not merely to the specialist in mediaeval thought, but to all who are interested in the development of philosophy. -

T. CORBISHLEY, S. J.

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*Revelation and Reason: The Christian Doctrine of Faith and Knowledge.* By Emil Brunner; translated by Olive Wyon. (London, Student Christian Movement Press Ltd. 1947. Pp. xii + 440. Price 25s.)

This is a book of unquestionable importance for theologians, indeed for all who want to understand one of the major movements of modern religious thought. What chiefly excites my admiration for it is the way in which it combines the forthrightness of its central thesis with moderation, subtlety and extensive qualifications in its presentation of the wide range of subjects with which it deals; (though whether the result is balance or inconsistency is an important question). It is just these qualities, however, which make the book impossible to summarize briefly; and I confine myself therefore to the barest outline of what seem to me the two most fundamental points discussed.

1. What is revelation? Brunner contrasts what he calls the Catholic and the Biblical concepts of revelation (of which of course he upholds the latter). According to the former, revelation consists in the supernatural imparting to human beings of knowledge of certain facts or doctrines, which can then be combined into a system along with those known by natural processes. The Biblical view, however (which, he says, was held by the early Church but lost even during the first century, to be briefly recaptured at the Reformation but submerged again until recent times) is that revelation takes the form of a personal encounter and that its content is God Himself, or Christ, or the Word of God. The Word of God is not the Bible, but is to be found in the Bible, or in the right reception of the message of the Bible, similarly, Christ does not seem to be the "historical Jesus" but God Incarnate as apprehended by faith. Faith is the human acceptance of God's revelation, and is not to be confused with belief in certain doctrines. Brunner goes on, however, to recognize a two-fold revelation: (a) a revelation given to all men in the created world, men have, however, refused to recognize God in this revelation and have thereby become sinners, and this sinfulness in turn has made them less and less capable of recognizing God. (b) A special historical revelation of God in Christ, which breaks through man's sinfulness and brings forgiveness and transformation.

2. What is the relation of revelation to "reason"—a term which Brunner uses to cover all acquiring of natural knowledge, including not only science and mathematics but also such matters as our best ethical intuitions and philosophical theology? Both, he says, yield *knowledge*, but they are to be sharply distinguished, both as modes of knowing and in their contents; what *can* be rationally known *cannot* be revealed, and *vice versa*. Yet clearly the spheres in which revelation brings its own distinctive kind of knowledge are spheres in which reason also operates, and this leads to the question of how far rational processes can be valid independent of revelation; or, to use more Brunnerian terminology, in what spheres and to what extent our rational knowledge is affected by sin, so that there will be a vital difference between a

Christian and a non-Christian view of the question at issue. The answer is in the form of a scale beginning with mathematics and logic, where there is no disturbance of reason by sin, and passing through natural science, history, law, politics, ethics, etc., to theology, where the disturbance is at its maximum. The principle is this: "The nearer anything lies to the centre of existence where we are concerned with the whole, that is, with man's relation to God and the being of the person, the greater is the disturbance of rational knowledge by sin" (p. 383).

There is no space to comment on even a small fraction of the issues involved, but I select two important ones.

1. Brunner holds that all men without exception are sinful (apart from their reception of the revelation in Christ), and he holds this not on the grounds of the traditional doctrine of Original Sin\* (which asserts the existence of evil in men for which the individual is not himself strictly responsible and which has to be sharply distinguished from "actual sin"), but on the ground that they have all voluntarily and responsibly rejected the "revelation in the creation" and are thus wilfully ignorant of God. But is it really credible that there should be a genuine revelation given to everybody which everybody without exception has rejected? This might be arguable if it were held that men were sinful or "spiritually blind" *before* the revelation was given to them; but Brunner will have none of this—it is only through the presentation and rejection of the revelation that men become sinners at all.

2. Can we really rest content with as sharp a distinction between the contents of revelation and reason as that which Brunner draws? Does he even carry it through consistently himself? Take, e.g. his discussion of the theistic proofs. How are we to reconcile the recurring polemics against natural theology, the emphatic assertions that the content of the knowledge given by the proofs is "quite different" from that given by faith, that "the 'God' of the proofs . . . is not the Living God" (pp. 340-1), and so forth, with the contention that the proofs show "that by thinking we do not necessarily fall away from faith in God, but rather that we are led toward Him"? Especially when we remember that it is just here that according to Brunner our reason is most corrupted by sin, should we not expect him to say that here more than anywhere else our reason would lead us further and further into the wilderness and away from God? I thoroughly agree that the whole Christian doctrine of God could not possibly be established by natural theology alone, but I also think that, if properly understood, the conception of the "Dieu des philosophes et des savants" has a much higher religious content than either Pascal or Brunner would allow.

GEORGE E. HUGHES.

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*Clinical Psychology.* By CHARLES BERG, M.D., D.P.M. (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 1948. Pp. 503. Price 25s.)

The proceedings within the consulting room of a psychiatrist are often a matter of interested speculation by those who describe themselves as perfectly normal. When the psychiatrist is a psychotherapist and so sees his patient many times the speculation is not infrequently salted with jests or ominous remarks about the dangers of introspection. In this volume the curtain is drawn aside and we see a psychiatrist at work. The psychiatrist is also a psychotherapist and an avowed psychoanalyst, that is, a follower of Freud.

\* Brunner does, it is true, hold a doctrine of Original Sin, but the general line of his argument (and especially chap. 6, "The Revelation in the Creation") seems to me amply to justify what I say in this paragraph.

Dr. Berg writes with the fervour of one who speaks from the heart. "Who but the psychoanalysts would recognize—and I am sure that they and other psychologists (except me) do recognize—that *feeling*, emotion, is the essence of life . . ." The naïveté of such a statement perhaps increases its appeal. Certainly feeling and emotion bring *vividness* to the numerous sketches of psychoanalytical interviews which are used to illustrate the theoretical discussion. It is not, however, easy to understand the part feeling and emotion play in the technique of psychoanalysis when, as we learn in another place, the analyst must as far as possible reveal *nothing* of himself. The individual who aspires to pure reason is, it seems, in danger of finding that his emotions become repressed; and the author contrasts feeling and pure reason with a distinct preference for the former. Unfortunately it has not been made clear how reason could flourish in the absence of feeling or vice versa.

The scope of the volume is immense and this may account for the inadequate way in which methods and views differing from those of Freud are brushed aside. Yet it is surely inexcusable to dismiss the important work of Dr. Dalbiez by asserting that "the fundamental theories of psychoanalysis can be re-discovered and proved by the correct application of the technique"; and to suggest that Dalbiez's critical appraisal of Freudian method and doctrine is linked with his "resistances"

Psychoanalysis is a lengthy form of treatment and even its adherents claim only modest successes with carefully selected cases. But our author while devoting over thirty pages to "Short Treatment" regards it as a regrettable innovation. No mention is made of the work by Alexander and French at the Chicago Institute of Psychoanalysis where "short treatment" is used with excellent results. Berg perhaps "holds an almost superstitious belief that quick therapeutic results cannot be genuine" (Alexander). Adverse criticism is also levelled against "Individual methods." The contributions of Adolf Meyer, Reich, Schilder, Adler and Jung are scrutinized and found wanting. This is perhaps the least valuable part of the book. We read that it is difficult to describe adequately Jung's *Analytical Psychology* "in the small space at our disposal." Why not have taken more space? After all this is a long book.

Nevertheless Jung is given a few marks. His concepts of *extraversion* and *introversion*, the *collective unconscious*, and the *complex* are declared to be of importance. While discussing the psychopathology of schizophrenia he appears to agree with Jung's work on the psychogenesis of this psychosis in which there is "regression to elements in the collective unconscious." The origin of this morbid process, according to Dr. Berg's hypothesis, lies in the frustration of sexuality at the Oedipus stage of development and a consequent breaking of contact between the sexual drive and reality. This hypothesis is extended to all psychogenic disorders "without exception." It is an interesting hypothesis and an unexpected support is claimed for it, namely, that Freud himself suggested it, unconsciously, in his division of psychogenic disorders into "transference neurosis" and "narcissistic or paraphrenic conditions."

The author is at his best when he writes out of the fulness of his own clinical experience of the neuroses. He is less convincing in his criticism of other psychiatrists and in his "revolutionary suggestions for the future." Education is to be revolutionized, "so that the child is no longer stuffed with uninteresting and useless knowledge (e.g. Latin)." In other ways also our social structure will require prophylactic alterations spread over countless generations.

An excellent glossary and a lengthy index add to the convenience of the layman for whom, apparently, this book is written.

E. A. BENNET.

# PHILOSOPHY

*Essays in Pragmatism.* By William James, Edited with Introduction by Albury Castell. (Hafner Publishing Co., New York. Pp. xiv + 176. Price \$1.90 and 0.90c.).

"An idea becomes true, is made true by events." "The possession of true thought means everywhere the possession of invaluable instruments of action" (p. 163). "Truths have only this quality in common, that they pay" (p. 168). "The true is only the expedient in the way of our thinking, just as the right is only the expedient in the way of our behaviour. Expedient in almost any fashion and expedient in the long run and on the whole" (foreseen or not) (p. 168). "Our obligation to seek truth is part of our general obligation to do what pays" (p. 170). "Religion will always drive irreligion out—therefore—we must postulate a divine thinker" (p. 81).

These essays, re-read after forty or fifty years by one who once argued with the now almost legendary Schiller, seem emphatically dated, not to say loose and crude, yet some of their dicta, not always mutually consistent, seem homely "Truth—meaning nothing but eventual verification" (p. 143).

Surely, underlying the main theory is a confusion between what we mean by the word *true* or *truth* and the test (or one of the tests) by which we more or less confidently apply it. "Health" does not mean the action of mercury in the clinical thermometer, other causes may effect that, as other beliefs beside true ones seem empirically to pay, and true ones not always.

It seems fairer to pragmatism than to some other philosophies to enquire after the psychological conditions which favoured its flourishing at a certain time and in certain places.

(1) The "naïve realist" was apt to say that a "true" belief is one which "corresponds" to the facts (meaning that the belief "X is Y" is true when X really is Y). But, as he was also apt to admit that "we only know our own ideas," the idealist easily pushed him into allowing that any truth we can ever know must consist in the "coherence" of our "ideas," not of any two chance ideas, but of all thinking past, present or future. But since none of us can think all this thinking, still less apprehend its coherence, it was as impossible for the idealist as for the realist to know any truth. So the pragmatist claimed to have discovered a practicable test: "Does it pay?" Unluckily the payment is not cash but a cheque post-dated for the day of judgment, when (it pays us to think) there may be some effects in the bank.

(2) On this crisis of epistemology there supervened the application of a biological theory of evolution to the developments of belief, though these are not inherited but transmitted by argument and precept. Some pragmatists certainly held that all and only those beliefs which have survival value are true, presumably for just so long as they survive or spread. And, of course, what has survival value in one environment may lose it when the environment (though not necessarily the object of the belief) changes. The belief then that devilish powers can ever be purchased for a soul was once true, became, I suppose, neutral, and is now untrue; and the contrary belief had an opposite development. We cannot tell what will be believed in 1,000 years; but we do not easily think that such transactions were once actual but now are contrary to nature, yet may become actual again.

(3) Christian Science was "discovered" and published by a compatriot of James, some half-century before his *Will to Believe* and *Varieties of Religious Experience*, in a time and country in which the adage that "Nothing succeeds like success" had perhaps its *floruit*. More nearly contemporary was an extreme version of faith-healing associated with the name of Dr. Coué. It seems no unfair suggestion that the atmosphere was favourable to a transition from



## NEW BOOKS

the premiss that it often pays in the long run (though it may require "an effort of faith") to believe what is in fact true, to the conclusion that truth is an effort of faith which pays. And that transition we seem to observe in James's *Will to Believe* and *Pragmatism's Conception of Truth*. Beliefs have survival value in certain environments, and a belief about the environment becomes true by surviving.

E. F. CARRITT.

*Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Filosofia a Roma, Nov. 1946. Vol. I: Il Materialismo Storico. Pp. lix, 453. 1,000 lire. Vol. II: L'Esistenzialismo. Pp. 577. 1,200 lire. (Milan: Castelfani, 1947-48.)*

Although these two quarto volumes, containing 117 papers, are not susceptible of brief review, they deserve to be noticed, since they present the fullest philosophical symposia on the two subjects mentioned. They express Continental moods and concerns that have not yet invaded our own philosophy. The contributions, a few of which are fairly substantial, are mostly in Italian; there are 27 in French (the majority of them, as one would expect, in Vol. II), six in Spanish, two in German, and one in English.

In Vol. I, which includes the one English paper, by Santayana, virtually every shade of opinion is expressed, from Marxism and Leninism to the philosophy of the Roman Catholic seminaries, but the debate is conducted throughout at the philosophical level. The voice of Croce is missing. Some of the papers express intellectualized passion, some are detached, and some are plainly written on the subject only because the subject was set. Here and there the misgiving peeps out that Marxism is not philosophical enough to make such an organized technical examination fruitful, and not a few of the symposiasts manage to make a paper only by taking up a Marxian idea and considering it without documentation. No striking conclusions appear. My own interest has been moved from the subject to the variety of attitudes and methods of the writers. Among the prominent contributors are Ugo Spirito, G. della Volpa, R. Aron, and Julien Benda.

In Vol. II also it is clear that some of the contributors are writing on a set theme. This is evident, for example, in the paper by Emile Bréhier, whose name would attract many readers. Maurice Blondel roundly dismisses Existentialism as an unhealthy and un-novel pseudo-philosophy. Karl Jaspers avoids the theme, writing instead on biblical religion. Sartre is absent, but Marcel is here—in a paper regrettably short—with other supporters of Existentialism, moved by the mental disorientation of Europe. Among the distinguished Italian contributors are Aliotta and Sciacca. Collected in an Appendix are fourteen papers on epistemological problems, treated without reference to the subject of the volume.

T. E. JESSOP.

*An Historical Introduction to Modern Philosophy.* By HUGH MILLER. (Macmillan Company. New York, pp. vii + 615. Price 25s.)

This is an enthusiastic book, and for this reason alone should prove stimulating at a time when philosophical enthusiasm is out of fashion. Mr. Miller has attempted a very ambitious task. Even six hundred pages is a small compass for a survey of philosophical development (and Mr. Miller is concerned with development and progress rather than with mere historical narrative) from the Pre-Socratics to Bertrand Russell. He claims an insight which grasps the truth in the half-truths of the conflicting "isms" (his word), a power of synthesis which bridges the most unbridgable gulfs of opposition.

## PHILOSOPHY

Certainly he cannot be accused of unwillingness to learn. Of the hundreds of writers whom he mentions (including even the wicked Karl Marx) there is hardly one to whom Mr. Miller does not acknowledge some indebtedness. Summing up on scientific rationalism (p. 554), he writes: "We can now correct this error and salvage its half-truth"; and this statement is typical of Mr. Miller's confident and generous eclecticism. Too confident and too generous? I think so. But I hope that many readers will make the trial for themselves, for Mr. Miller's very confidence is challenging and provocative, especially to contemporary British academic fashions.

Where philosophy, academically so recognized, fails him, as it occasionally does even in Mr. Miller's generous conception of its scope, he does not hesitate to look beyond it, for example to poetry or religion. Thus on page 220, Shakespeare is assessed as "the prophet of the inquiring, self-critical and exploratory naturalism that has been (*sic*) the science, art, philosophy and ethics of the last three centuries."

The New Testament also engages Mr. Miller's attention. Undeterred by critical difficulties, he claims as usual to express its essential truth.

It would not be fantastic from Mr. Miller's point of view to trace a parallel between creative love and the European Recovery Programme. This is the sort of analogy that we might expect from his pages. For him, political justice is based on cosmic justice, and both on cosmic love. "The condition of world amity is the establishment everywhere of democratic government" (p. 352), and we know that this can be done only with American aid; and democracy, according to Mr. Miller, must be fulfilled through love. "No more than logic provides scientific truth if it is not the instrument of willing attention to all particular fact, does a democratic constitution secure justice if it is not used to implement a kindly and loving goodwill toward all human individuals" (p. 603).

The parallel drawn in this last quotation is interesting and characteristic. As logic is to fact, so is the constitution to the citizen.

Mr. Miller's conception of philosophy is thus so elastic that one would hardly expect to find him selecting a single problem as *the* problem. Yet he does so at the outset (p. v): "... the problem which has stimulated the development of the western intellect, a problem which has become steadily more insistent, until to-day its solution is in literal fact a matter of life and death. The problem concerns the relationship of *theory to practice*, or more concretely, of *science to government*" (my italics). This problem can be solved, according to Mr. Miller, by thinkers who recognize philosophy "as a study politically motivated, inquiring into the implications of natural knowledge for the opposed postulates of necessity and freedom. The postulate of natural necessity has been shown to support the doctrine of absolutistic government, and democratic self-government has been shown to require the postulate of natural freedom. Long controversy between rationalistic philosophers affirming necessity and empirical philosophers affirming freedom is thus closed by the victory of empirical philosophy, achieved in our own century" (p. 587). (These quotations incidentally illustrate the author's conception of "concreteness".)

Perhaps the most fundamental contradiction in this book is that between the author's tendency to support empiricism, as the philosophy of freedom and democracy, on the one hand, and, on the other, his anxiety to appear "at once rational and empirical." Throughout these pages he never quite makes up his mind whether to proclaim the "victory" of empiricism over rationalism (as already quoted); or to establish a balance of power between them, which seems to be the "successful issue" in chapter 27.

## NEW BOOKS

I have concentrated on Mr. Miller's presuppositions and convictions rather than on the details of his historical chapters; for these must obviously be read in the light of such convictions. His summaries are competent and presented with a dangerous appearance of clarity: they are, indeed, often too "slick," and calculated to lead the busy reader to ignore the author's own excellent emphasis on the need to go to the original texts. Mr. Miller's fondness for superlatives, especially laudatory superlatives, is also excessive. There are too many "greatest" advocates or pioneers of this or that in his pages. It contributes little to the history of philosophy to label someone as a "master mind" or to talk of claims to "undying fame." This sort of method surely went out with the fashion of looking for "fathers" and "founders" of "schools of philosophy."

Neither as an historian nor as a philosopher is Mr. Miller content with less than finality. In his anxiety to miss nothing that may contribute to his synthesis, he is often, as already noted, much too generous to his authors. On the other hand, he seems to think (e.g., p. 96) that "conclusive evidence" can be discovered, in the course of history, against certain metaphysical systems. His six hundred odd pages would have been of greater value had they been ruthlessly curtailed by about half. This could probably have been achieved by the deletion of rhetorical flourishes, picturesque metaphors, and exaggerated superlatives. As it is, many of them throw more significant light on contemporary American culture than they do on the history of philosophy.

The book is attractively produced and well indexed. I noticed only one misprint—"scienc" for "science" on p. 48. D. J. McCracken.

✓ *Civilisation and Religious Values.* By H. D. A. MAJOR. (Allen & Unwin, Price 7s. 6d.)

When Dr. Major resigned his office as Principal of Ripon Hall, he received an enthusiastic demonstration of gratitude from his fellow Modernists. For he has suffered for his brave advocacy of unpopular views. As he says in this book, "a scientific religion cannot advance without ideals and without martyrs."

These Hibbert Lectures are an admirable presentation of the writer's convictions, his hopes and his fears. Civilization cannot endure without religion, and religion for us must mean Christianity purged of unyielding traditionalism and ready to accept a progressive revelation. Both science and humanism have much to teach us, it is a mistake to regard humanism as an enemy, even when humanists like Prof. Gilbert Murray refuse to call themselves Christians. The early lectures deal with some of the subjects of Toynbee's great work, and we may wonder that Dr. Major does not refer to it.

Liberal Churchmen may differ on minor points. We are tired of Tennyson's too popular lines about the one far-off event to which the whole creation moves. Unless we reject what the French call the principle of Carnot, and we the law of entropy, the one far-off event is the total extinction of life everywhere. Dr. Major seems to be a perfectibilist. He rather rashly thinks that the words of Christ about the broad and the narrow gate were not meant to refer to the future. And yet he rejects the "heresy" of an ineluctable law of progress.

Personally, though here I am in a minority even among Liberal theologians, I think it very unlikely that "the prophet of Nazareth in Galilee" ever believed Himself to be that figment of bellicose nationalism, the Messiah. The Jewish Church invested Him with this honour, as the Greeks called Him

## PHILOSOPHY

*Kurios* and then *Logos*. These were the highest titles available, short of complete apotheosis. As long as the controversy with the Jews continued, the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy, as interpreted by apocalyptists, remained in the forefront.

I am glad that Dr. Major rejects the so-called "eschatological" theory of Christ's teaching, the theory of Schweitzer, Burkitt and Loisy. The prediction of the "end of an age" was part of current Messianism; it could never have been the basis of a great religion. Men "accept" traditional beliefs about the future; they seldom hold them strongly enough to alter their lives. This particular delusion faded away very quietly. In the Fourth Gospel the gift of the Paraclete is the real Parousia, and the last verse of Matthew says the same.

W. R. INGE.

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*The Freedom of the Individual in Society.* By T. E. JESSOP. (The Ryerson Press, Toronto. Pp. vi + 80. No price given.)

The three lectures which make up this book were delivered under the auspices of the Chancellor Dunning Trust at Queen's University. The purpose of the Trust is "to promote understanding and appreciation of the supreme importance of the dignity, freedom and responsibility of the individual person in human society." Hence the lectures should be regarded as edifying talks on what some people consider political freedom to be and not as a serious contribution to political philosophy.

Even at this level they are not very good.

In his first lecture Professor Jessop sets out to show that historical study reveals a steady extension of human freedom from ancient Egypt to 1930. Since then there has been a spectacular restriction of it and it looks as if things are getting steadily worse. The question "freedom from what?" is not discussed, but, on the whole, freedom from police interference with the activities of authors and scientists rather than freedom from economic exploitation of workers by their employers is meant. There is, however, some confusion about this. We learn, for instance, that the Egyptians had very little freedom because they were compelled to build pyramids whereas the Greeks had a lot of it. But, as Aristotle observed, the Egyptian priests had plenty of leisure to do pure mathematics: and somebody must have worked quite hard to build the Parthenon.

The second lecture does ask "freedom from what?" and gives a very queer answer. There is, it seems, something called "causal law" or "the bondage of Nature" from which human beings have escaped. None of the other animals have brought off this trick, though very clever chimpanzees sometimes get their noses just outside the prison. It is because human beings have escaped from the bondage of Nature that they deserve one another's respect. This seems to me just a misunderstanding of Kant's doctrine that we are phenomenally determined but noumenally free. Anyway, if it means anything it makes nonsense of the argument in Lecture I. If freedom is this sort of thing, neither the State nor anybody else can restrict it.

The third lecture is an attempt to reconcile the claims of this metaphysical individualism with those of the modern State. Roughly, the question is "How far do we have to depart from the principles of pure *laissez faire* in view of the fact that some individuals regrettably misuse their freedom?" As might be expected, no definite answer is forthcoming.

I cannot find anything here which either clarifies or advances our thought about political philosophy, and I hope that Canadian readers do not regard these lectures as a fair sample of what philosophers in this country are doing.

T. D. WELDON.

## NEW BOOKS

*The Christian in Philosophy.* By J. V. L. CASSERLEY. (Faber & Faber. Pp. 266. Price 18s. net.)

This is a very competent and well written study of Christian philosophy from St. Paul to our own day. The author is a strong partisan, who is not afraid to express *unusual opinions*, as when he says that the late Mr. Collingwood was "the greatest English philosopher since Berkeley." His heroes are Augustine and Anselm, and among the moderns Kierkegaard and Barth. He speaks with great respect of Aquinas, but thinks that the Neo-Thomists have hardly done justice to scholastic philosophy by confining their attention to its greatest representative.

Origen and Erasmus are not mentioned at all, and he has nothing but scorn for Liberal theologians. As an extreme personalist he has no use for the mystics, agreeing with Keyserling that mysticism always ends in impersonal immortality. Eckhart and Böhme, the Cambridge Platonists and William Law, are not noticed, and nothing is said of the Reformers. He thinks he can establish a chain from Augustine to the "existentialists", for he is very modern, and has studied Semantics, Logical Positivism, and Historical Relativism. Some of us are still uncertain what existentialism means; some of its exponents make it look like solipsistic pragmatism. As for Barth, one is surprised to find a man of the author's ability admiring that reactionary and philosophically worthless writer, who is not much studied in this country.

Even more surprising is his support of what he calls Biblical Christianity, of which he thinks there is "a great revival." There is no revival of Biblicism; there has never been a time when the Bible was less read. No educated man thinks of the Bible as one book, or equates the Yahweh of Genesis with the Father of the Fourth Gospel. At the Reformation the component parts of a syncretistic religion fell apart. The Catholic, a Roman citizen and sacramentalist, is more than half Pagan; the Protestant, with his book-religion and sabbatarianism, is more than half a Jew. The early books of the Old Testament are a stumbling-block to us now. The greatest event in human history was the almost simultaneous appearance of a higher religion about 500 B.C. in China, India, Persia, Palestine, and Greece.

The key to Mr. Casserley's position is his uncompromising historicism. The divergent valuations of history at present divide philosophers into two camps. New Realists and New Idealists agree in asserting the reality of time and the supreme importance of history. History for the Jews is a theodicy; for the Greeks it was merely an example, on a large scale, of the alternate composition and disintegration of the elements of which the world consists. I think there was never a chair of history at Athens or Alexandria. But modern historicism is neither Greek nor Jewish nor Christian. It is a reaction against rationalism, and regards history not as a record of discontinuities, natural and supernatural, but as a picture of an automatic evolutionary process. Mr. Casserley however, believes in "uniqueness," in what Kierkegaard calls "the exceptional." He is absolutely opposed to Lessing's famous dictum that "accidental historical truths can never serve as proofs for eternal truths of the reason. The transition by which it is proposed to base an eternal truth upon historical testimony is a leap." Lessing's view is supported by the uncertainty of history. "We are told," says Samuel Butler, "that the Deity cannot alter the past. But historians can and do, perhaps that is why they are allowed to exist."

This book may be recommended to those who wish to study an able presentation of the recoil from intellectualism which has invaded our philosophy as well as our politics. In the opinion of your reviewer, the *philosophia perennis* will see most of these new theories to bed.

W. R. INGE.

## PHILOSOPHY

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## CORRESPONDENCE

JOHN LOCKE

SIR,

I am writing a biography of John Locke. My chief source of new information is the Lovelace collection of documents which is now at the Bodleian, and the shorthand journals of John Locke, to which Dr. von Leyden has only recently discovered the key. There are other John Locke papers in public and private collections which I have not been able to locate. May I solicit the help of your readers? Would anyone who knows the whereabouts of any such John Locke documents please write to me?

10 Wellington Square, Oxford.

MAURICE CRANSTON.

May, 1949.

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. THE RELEVANCE OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH TO PHILOSOPHY. PROFESSOR C. D. BROAD . . . . .	291
II. CAUSALITY, DETERMINISM AND PROBABILITY. J. E. MOYAL . . . . .	310
III. LIBERAL MORALITY AND SOCIALIST MORALITY. W. B. GALLIE, M.A. . . . .	318
IV. THE MORAL SITUATION. N. H. G. ROBINSON, D.Litt. . . . .	335
V. PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY: THE STATE OF PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES IN INDIA. P. T. RAJU, M.A., Ph.D. . . . .	342
VI. NEW BOOKS . . . . .	348
VII. A NOTE ON SEMANTICS . . . . .	381
VIII. INSTITUTE NOTES . . . . .	384

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# PHILOSOPHY

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## THE RELEVANCE OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH TO PHILOSOPHY

PROFESSOR C. D. BROAD

*Introduction.* I will begin this paper by stating in rough outline what I consider to be the relevance of psychical research to philosophy, and I shall devote the rest of it to developing this preliminary statement in detail.

In my opinion psychical research is highly relevant to philosophy for the following reasons. There are certain limiting principles which we unhesitatingly take for granted as the framework within which all our practical activities and our scientific theories are confined. Some of these seem to be self-evident. Others are so overwhelmingly supported by all the empirical facts which fall within the range of ordinary experience and the scientific elaborations of it (including under this heading orthodox psychology) that it hardly enters our heads to question them. Let us call these *Basic Limiting Principles*. Now psychical research is concerned with alleged events which seem *prima facie* to conflict with one or more of these principles. Let us call any event which seems *prima facie* to do this an *Ostensibly Paranormal Event*.

A psychical researcher has to raise the following questions about any ostensibly paranormal event which he investigates. (1) Did it really happen? Has it been accurately observed and correctly described? (2) Supposing that it really did happen and has been accurately observed and correctly described, does it really conflict with any of the basic limiting principles? Can it not fairly be regarded merely as a strange coincidence, not outside the bounds of probability. Failing that, can it not be explained by reference to already known agents and laws? Failing that, can it not be explained by postulating agents or laws or both, which have not hitherto been recognized,

## PHILOSOPHY

but which fall within the framework of accepted basic limiting principles?

Now it might well have happened that every alleged ostensibly paranormal event which had been carefully investigated by a competent psychical researcher was found either not to have occurred at all, or to have been misdescribed in important respects, or to be a chance-coincidence not beyond the bounds of probability, or to be susceptible of an actual or hypothetical explanation within the framework of the basic limiting principles. If that had been so, philosophy could afford to ignore psychical research; for it is no part of its duty to imitate the White Knight by carrying a mouse-trap when it goes out riding, on the offchance that there might be mice in the saddle. But that is not how things have in fact turned out. It will be enough at present to refer to a single instance, viz., Dr. Soal's experiments on card-guessing with Mr. Shackleton as subject, of which I gave a full account in *Philosophy* in 1944. There can be no doubt that the events described happened and were correctly reported; that the odds against chance-coincidence piled up to billions to one; and that the nature of the events, which involved both telepathy and precognition, conflicts with one or more of the basic limiting principles.

Granted that psychical research has established the occurrence of events which conflict with one or more of the basic limiting principles, one might still ask: How does this concern philosophy? Well, I think that there are some definitions of "philosophy," according to which it would not be concerned with these or any other newly discovered facts, no matter how startling. Suppose that philosophy consists in accepting without question, and then attempting to analyse, the beliefs which are common to contemporary plain men in Europe and North America, i.e., roughly the beliefs which such persons acquired uncritically in their nurseries and have since found no occasion to doubt. Then, perhaps, the only relevance of psychical research to philosophy would be to show that philosophy is an even more trivial academic exercise than plain men had been inclined to suspect. But, if we can judge of what philosophy is by what great philosophers have *done* in the past, its business is by no means confined to accepting without question, and trying to analyse, the beliefs held in common by contemporary European and North American plain men. Judged by that criterion, philosophy involves at least two other closely connected activities, which I call *Synopsis* and *Synthesis*. Synopsis is the deliberate viewing together of aspects of human experience which, for one reason or another, are generally kept apart by the plain man and even by the professional scientist or scholar. The object of synopsis is to try to find out how these various aspects are inter-related. Synthesis is the attempt to supply

## RELEVANCE OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

a coherent set of concepts and principles which shall cover satisfactorily all the regions of fact which have been viewed synoptically.

Now what I have called the basic limiting principles are plainly of great philosophical importance in connection with synopsis and synthesis. These principles do cover very satisfactorily an enormous range of well established facts of the most varied kinds. We are quite naturally inclined to think that they must be all-embracing; we are correspondingly loth to accept any alleged fact which seems to conflict with them; and, if we are forced to accept it, we strive desperately to house it within the accepted framework. But just in proportion to the philosophic importance of the basic limiting principles is the philosophic importance of any well-established exception to them. The speculative philosopher who is honest and competent will want to widen his synopsis so as to include these facts; and he will want to revise his fundamental concepts and basic limiting principles in such a way as to include the old and the new facts in a single coherent system.

*The Basic Limiting Principles.* I will now state some of the most important of the basic limiting principles which, apart from the findings of psychical research, are commonly accepted either as self-evident or as established by overwhelming and uniformly favourable empirical evidence. These fall into four main divisions, and in some of the divisions there are several principles.

(1) *General Principles of Causation.* (1.1) It is self-evidently impossible that an event should begin to have any effects before it has happened.

(1.2) It is impossible that an event which ends at a certain date should contribute to cause an event which begins at a later date unless the period between the two dates is occupied in one or other of the following ways. (i) The earlier event initiates a process of change, which continues throughout the period and at the end of it contributes to initiate the later event. Or (ii) the earlier event initiates some kind of structural modification which persists throughout the period. This begins to co-operate at the end of the period with some change which is then taking place, and together they cause the later event.

(1.3) It is impossible that an event, happening at a certain date and place, should produce an effect at a remote place unless a finite period elapses between the two events, and unless that period is occupied by a causal chain of events occurring successively at a series of points forming a continuous path between the two places.

(2) *Limitations on the Action of Mind on Matter.* It is impossible for an event in a person's mind to produce *directly* any change in the material world except certain changes in his own brain. It is true that it seems to him that many of his volitions produce directly

certain movements in his fingers, feet, throat, tongue, etc. These are what he wills, and he knows nothing about the changes in his brain. Nevertheless, it is these brain-changes which are the immediate consequences of his volitions; and the willed movements of his fingers, etc., follow, if they do so, only as rather remote causal descendants.

(3) *Dependence of Mind on Brain.* A necessary, even if not a sufficient, immediate condition of any mental event is an event in the brain of a living body. Each different mental event is immediately conditioned by a different brain-event. Qualitatively dissimilar mental events are immediately conditioned by qualitatively dissimilar brain events, and qualitatively similar mental events are immediately conditioned by qualitatively similar brain-events. Mental events which are so inter-connected as to be experiences of the same person are immediately conditioned by brain-events which happen in the same brain. If two mental events are experiences of different persons, they are *in general* immediately conditioned by brain-events which occur in different brains. This is not, however, a rule without exceptions. In the first place, there are occasional but quite common experiences, occurring in sleep or delirium, whose immediate conditions are events in a certain brain, but which are so loosely connected with each other or with the stream of normal waking experiences conditioned by events in that brain that they scarcely belong to any recognizable person. Secondly, there are cases of multiple personality, described and treated by psychiatrists. Here the experiences which are immediately conditioned by events in a single brain seem to fall into two or more sets, each of which constitutes the experiences of a different person. Such different persons are, however, more closely interconnected in certain ways than two persons whose respective experiences are immediately conditioned by events in different brains.

(4) *Limitations on Ways of acquiring Knowledge.* (4.1) It is impossible for a person to perceive a physical event or a material thing except by means of sensations which that event or thing produces in his mind. The object perceived is not the *immediate* cause of the sensations by which a person perceives it. The immediate cause of these is always a certain event in the percipient's brain; and the perceived object is (or is the seat of) a rather remote causal ancestor of this brain-event. The intermediate links in the causal chain are, first, a series of events in the space between the perceived object and the percipient's body; then an event in a receptor organ, such as his eye or ear; and then a series of events in the nerve connecting this receptor organ to his brain. When this causal chain is completed, and a sensory experience arises in the percipient's mind, that experience is not a state of acquaintance with the perceived external



## RELEVANCE OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

object, either as it was at the moment when it initiated this sequence of events or as it now is. The qualitative and relational character of the sensation is wholly determined by the event in the brain which is its immediate condition; and the character of the latter is in part dependent on the nature and state of the afferent nerve, of the receptor organ, and of the medium between the receptor and the perceived object.

(4.2) It is impossible for *A* to know what experiences *B* is having or has had except in one or other of the following ways. (i) By hearing and understanding sentences, descriptive of that experience, uttered by *B*, or by reading and understanding such sentences, written by *B*, or reproductions or translations of them. (I include under these headings messages in Morse or any other artificial language which is understood by *A*.) (ii) By hearing and interpreting cries which *B* makes, or seeing and interpreting his gestures, facial expressions, etc. (iii) By seeing, and making conscious or unconscious inferences from, persistent material records, such as tools, pottery, pictures, etc., which *B* has made or used in the past. (I include under this head seeing copies or transcriptions, etc., of such objects.)

Similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the conditions under which *A* can acquire from *B* knowledge of facts which *B* knows or acquaintance with propositions which *B* contemplates. Suppose that *B* knows a certain fact or is contemplating a certain proposition. Then the only way in which *A* can acquire from *B* knowledge of that fact or acquaintance with that proposition is by *B* stating it in sentences or other symbolic expressions which *A* can understand, and by *A* perceiving those expressions themselves, or reproductions or translations of them, and interpreting them.

(4.3) It is impossible for a person to forecast, except by chance, that an event of such and such a kind will happen at such and such a place and time except under one or other of the following conditions. (i) By making an inference from data supplied to him by his present sensations, introspections, or memories, together with his knowledge of certain rules of sequence which have hitherto prevailed in nature. (ii) By accepting from others, whom he trusts, either such data or such rules or both, and then making his own inferences: or by accepting from others the inferences which they have made from data which they claim to have had and regularities which they claim to have verified. (iii) By non-inferential expectations, based on associations which have been formed by certain repeated sequences in his past experience and which are now stimulated by some present experience.

It should be noted here that, when the event to be forecast by a person is a future experience or action of himself or of another person, we have a rather special case, which is worth particular

mention, although it falls under one or other of the above headings. *A* may be able to forecast that he himself will have a certain experience or do a certain action, because he knows introspectively that he has formed a certain intention. He may be able to forecast that *B* will have a certain experience or do a certain action, because he has reason to believe, either from *B*'s explicit statements or from other signs, that *B* has formed a certain intention.

(4.4) It is impossible for a person to know or have reason to believe that an event of such and such a kind happened at such and such a place and time in the past except under one or another of the following conditions. (i) That the event was an experience which he himself had during the lifetime of his present body; that this left a trace in him which has lasted until now; and that this trace can be stimulated as to give rise in him to a memory of that past experience. (ii) That the event was one which he witnessed during the lifetime of his present body; that the experience of witnessing it left a trace in him which has lasted till now; and that he now remembers the event witnessed, even though he may not be able to remember the experience of witnessing it. (iii) That the event was experienced or witnessed by someone else, who now remembers it and tells this person about it. (iv) That the event was experienced or witnessed by someone (whether this person himself or another), who made a record of it either at the time or afterwards from memory; that this record or copies or translations of it have survived; and that it is now perceptible by and intelligible to this person. (These four methods may be summarized under the heads of present memory, or testimony based on present memory or on records of past perceptions or memories.) (v) Explicit or implicit inference, either made by the person himself or made by others and accepted by him on their authority, from data supplied by present sense-perception, introspection, or memory, together with knowledge of certain laws of nature.

I do not assert that these nine instances of basic limiting principle are exhaustive, or that they are all logically independent of each other. But I think that *they will suffice as examples of important restrictive principles of very wide range, which are commonly accepted to-day by educated plain men and by scientists in Europe and America.*

*General Remarks on Psychical Research.* I turn now to psychical research. Before going into detail I will make some general remarks about its data, methods and affiliations.

(1) The subject may be, and has been, pursued in two ways. (i) As a critical investigation of accounts of events which, if they happened at all, did so spontaneously under conditions which had not been deliberately pre-arranged and cannot be repeated at will.

an extraordinary chance-coincidence; though I do not myself think that this would be a reasonable view to take of them collectively, even if they were not supported by experimental evidence, when one considers the number and variety of such cases which have stood up to critical investigation. But, however that may be, there is no means of estimating *just how unlikely* it is that any one such case, or the whole collection of them, should be mere chance-coincidence.

Now, if there were no independent experimental evidence for telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, etc., it would always be possible to take the following attitude towards the sporadic cases. "Certainly," it might be said, "the evidence seems water-tight, and the unlikeliness of mere chance-coincidence seems enormous, even though one cannot assign a numerical measure to it. But, if the reported events were genuine, they would involve telepathy or clairvoyance or precognition. The antecedent improbability of these is practically infinite, whilst there is always a possibility of mistake or fraud even in the best attested and most carefully checked reports of any complex incident which cannot be repeated at will. And there is no coincidence so detailed and improbable that it may not happen occasionally in the course of history. Therefore, it is more reasonable to hold that even the best attested sporadic cases were either misreported or were extraordinary coincidences than to suppose that they happened as reported and that there was a causal connection between *A's* experience and the nearly contemporary event in *B's* life to which it seemed to correspond."

Now, whether this attitude would or would not be reasonable in the absence of experimental cases, it is not reasonable when the latter are taken into account and the sporadic cases are considered in relation to them. In card-guessing experiments, e.g., we can assign a numerical value to the most probable number of correct guesses in a given number of trials on the supposition that chance-coincidence is the only factor involved. We can also assign a numerical value to the probability that, if chance coincidence only were involved, the actual number of correct guesses would exceed the most probable number by more than a given amount. We can then go on repeating the experiments, under precisely similar conditions, hundreds or thousands of times, with independent witnesses, elaborate checks on the records, and so on.

Now Dr. Soal, Professor Rhine and his colleagues, and Mr. Tyrrell, working quite independently of each other, have found that certain subjects can cognize correctly, with a frequency so greatly above chance-expectation that the odds against such an excess being fortuitous are billions to one, what another person *has been and is no longer perceiving*, what he *is contemporaneously perceiving*, and what he *will not begin to perceive until a few seconds later*. This happens

## RELEVANCE OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

under conditions where there is no possibility of relevant information being conveyed to the subject by normal sensory means, and where there is no possibility of his consciously or unconsciously inferring the future event from any data available to him at the time. It follows that the antecedent improbability of paranormal cognition, whether post-cognitive, simultaneous, or pre-cognitive, cannot reasonably be treated as practically infinite in the sporadic cases. These paranormal kinds of cognition must be reckoned with as experimentally verified possibilities, and, in view of this, it seems reasonable to accept and to build upon the best attested sporadic cases.

(3) The findings of psychical research should not be taken in complete isolation. It is useful to consider many of them in connection with certain admitted facts which fall within the range of orthodox abnormal psychology and psychiatry. The latter facts form the best bridge between ordinary common sense and natural science (including normal psychology), on the one hand, and psychical research, on the other. As I have already mentioned in connection with Principle 3, the occurrence of dreams and delirium and the cases of multiple personality would suffice, even in the absence of all paranormal phenomena, to qualify the dogma that, if two mental events are experiences of different persons, they are always immediately conditioned by events in different brains. We can now go further than this. There are obvious and important analogies between the phenomena of trance-mediumship and those of alternating personality unaccompanied by alleged paranormal phenomena. Again, the fact of dreaming, and the still more startling facts of experimentally induced hypnotic hallucinations, show that each of us has within himself the power to produce, in response to suggestions from within or without, a more or less coherent quasi-sensory presentation of ostensible things and persons, which may easily be taken for a scene from the ordinary world of normal waking life. Cases of veridical hallucination corresponding to remote contemporary events, instances of haunted rooms, and so on, are slightly less incredible when regarded as due to this normal power, abnormally stimulated on rare occasions by a kind of hypnotic suggestion acting telepathically. It is certainly wise to press this kind of explanation as far as it will go, though one must be prepared for the possibility that it will not cover all the cases which we have to accept as genuine.

(4) If paranormal cognition and paranormal causation are facts, then it is quite likely that they are not confined to those very rare occasions on which they either manifest themselves sporadically in a spectacular way or to those very special conditions in which their presence can be experimentally established. They may well be

## RELEVANCE OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

continually operating in the background of our normal lives. Our understanding of, and our misunderstandings with, our fellow-men; our general emotional mood on certain occasions; the ideas which suddenly arise in our minds without any obvious introspectable cause; our unaccountable immediate emotional reactions towards certain persons; our sudden decisions where the introspectable motives seem equally balanced; and so on; all these may be in part determined by paranormal cognition and paranormal causal influences.

In this connection it seems to me that the following physical analogy is illuminating. Human beings have no special sensations in presence of magnetic fields. Had it not been for the two very contingent facts that there are loadstones, and that the one element (iron) which is strongly susceptible to magnetic influence is fairly common on earth, the existence of magnetism might have remained unsuspected to this day. Even so, it was regarded as a kind of mysterious anomaly until its connection with electricity was discovered and we gained the power to produce strong magnetic fields at will. Yet, all this while, magnetic fields had existed, and had been producing effects, whenever and wherever electric currents were passing. Is it not possible that natural mediums might be comparable to loadstones; that paranormal influences are as pervasive as magnetism; and that we fail to recognize this only because our knowledge and control of them are at about the same level as were men's knowledge and control of magnetism when Gilbert wrote his treatise on the magnet?

*Established Results of Psychical Research.* We can now consider in detail some well-established results of psychical research, which seem *prima facie* to conflict with one or more of our basic limiting principles.

I will begin with paranormal cognition. As I have said, the existence of this has been abundantly verified experimentally, and this fact makes it reasonable to accept the best attested and most carefully investigated of the *sporadic cases* as *genuine instances* of it. The following general remarks seem to be worth making about it.

(1) In much of the experimental work the word "cognition" must be interpreted behaviouristically, at least as regards the subject's introspectable mental processes. In Dr. Soal's experiments, e.g., the agent acts as if he often knows what card has been, or is now being, or very soon will be, looked at by the agent in an adjoining room. He does so in the following sense. He already knows that each of the cards bears a picture of one or other of a certain set of five animals. Whenever he receives a signal to inform him that the agent has just turned up a card he immediately writes down the initial letter of the name of one of these five animals. It is found that the letter

thus written agrees with the name of the animal on the card which *will next* be turned up by the agent so often that the odds against such an excess of hits being a mere matter of chance are about  $10^{35}$  to 1. Now the subject says that he writes down the initial letter "almost automatically" and that he seldom gets a mental image of the animal depicted. Again, he is not consciously aiming at guessing the nature of the card which *will next* be turned up. In the earlier experiments at least he was aiming at the card which he knew that the agent was *then* looking at. Lastly, a whole series of 25 cards are turned up in fairly rapid succession, the average interval being about 2.5 seconds. The behaviourist character of the whole process is even more marked in Mr. Tyrrell's experiments. If there is genuine cognition, it takes place at some level which is not introspectable by the subject.

(2) A most interesting fact, which has been noted by several experimenters, is the occurrence of *significantly negative results*, i.e., scores which are so much *below* chance-expectation that the odds against getting such poor results merely by chance are enormous. In order consistently to score below chance-expectation the subject must presumably know at some level of his consciousness what the target card is, and must for some reason be impelled to write down some *other alternative*.

(3) It has been common for writers and experimenters in psychical research to subdivide paranormal cognition into telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, etc. It should be noted, however, that the establishment of the occurrence of precognition makes it difficult in the case of many successful experiments to classify the results with confidence under any one of these heads. They are evidence for paranormal cognition of *some kind*, but it is uncertain of *which kind*.

I will now go a little further into this matter. We must allow for the following alternatives, which do not necessarily exclude each other. A causal condition of *A's* present paranormal cognition of  $x$  might be of any of the following kinds. (i) His own future normal cognition of  $x$ . This may be called a *precognitive autoscopic* condition. (ii) Another person's past, contemporary, or future normal cognition of  $x$ . This may be called a *telepathic* condition, and, according to the temporal circumstances, it will be called *post-cognitive*, *simultaneous*, or *precognitive*.

Now in any actual case of paranormal cognition we can raise the question, with regard to each of these conditions or any combination of them, whether it was necessary and whether it was sufficient. It cannot have been necessary if the instance occurred in its absence. It cannot be *known* to have been sufficient, though it may in fact have been so, if others of these conditions were fulfilled in addition to it. If we could verify the occurrence of a paranormal cognition in a case

where all these conditions were known to be absent, we might describe it as an instance of *pure clairvoyance*, which might be either post-cognitive, simultaneous, or precognitive. It should be noted that the word "clairvoyance," as I have just defined it, is a negative term. It denotes merely the occurrence of paranormal cognition in the absence of the autoscopic and the telepathic conditions. It is plainly difficult to imagine a case, in regard to which one could feel sure that it was purely clairvoyant. In order to be sure that *A*'s ostensible cognition of *x* was not conditioned either autoscopically or telepathically we should have to know that neither *A* himself nor anyone else would ever come to cognize *x* normally and that no one else either had cognized or was cognizing *x* normally at the time when *A*'s experience occurred. It is plain that all these negative conditions are seldom fulfilled. And, if they were, it is hard to see how *A* himself or anyone else could ascertain whether *A*'s ostensible cognition of *x* was veridical or delusive.

It does not follow that there are no cases of clairvoyance. For one or other of the autoscopic or telepathic conditions might be present in a particular case of paranormal cognition, but might either be not operating at all or be merely supplementing clairvoyance. Nor does it follow that there might not be cases in which an explanation in terms of autoscopia or telepathy, though possible, would be so far-fetched that it might be more plausible to describe them as instances of clairvoyance.

In Soal's experiments the autoscopic condition was absent; for the subject was not afterwards informed of the actual cards which had been turned up, and so could not have been autoscopically precognizing his own future state of normal information. Again, Soal interspersed among the normal runs of guesses, in which the agent took up the card and looked at it, other runs in which the agent merely touched the back of the card without looking at it. These variations were introduced sometimes with and sometimes without telling the subject. Now, in the interspersed runs the number of successful guesses sank to the level of chance-expectation, whilst in the normal runs, among which they were interspersed, it was very significantly above chance-expectation. So it would seem that, with this subject and these agents at any rate, the telepathic condition (in the precognitive form) is necessary to success.

In Mr. Tyrrell's experiments, however (*S.P.R. Proceedings*, Vol. 44) the subject scored very significantly above chance-expectation under conditions where precognitive autoscopia and every kind of telepathy seem to be excluded. These experiments were of a very different nature and with a different subject. Here the agent would press one or other of five keys connected with small lamps in five light-tight boxes. The subject had to open the lid of the box in which she

believed that the lamp had been lighted. Successes and failures were scored mechanically on a moving band of paper. Tyrrell introduced a commutator between the keys and the lamps. The effect of this was that the same key would light different lamps on different occasions, and that the agent would never know which lamp he was lighting when he pressed any particular key. Moreover, the automatic recorder merely marked success or failure; it did not show *which box* was responsible for any particular success. So it would not help the subject if she were precognitively aware either of her own or of the experimenter's subsequent normal perception of the record. It would seem, therefore, that there is good evidence for paranormal cognition under purely clairvoyant conditions. Good evidence under these conditions is also claimed by Professor Rhine and his colleagues.

*The established Results and the Basic Limiting Principles.* We are now in a position to confront our nine basic limiting principles with the results definitely established by experimental psychical research.

(1) Any paranormal cognition obtained under precognitive conditions, whether autoscopic or telepathic, seems *prima facie* to conflict with Principle 1.1. For the occurrence of the cognition seems to be in part determined by an event which will not happen until *after* it has occurred. E.g., in Soal's experiments the subject's act of writing down the initial letter of the name of a certain animal seems in many cases to be in part determined by the fact that the agent *will* a few seconds later be looking at a card on which that animal is depicted.

It also conflicts with Principle 4.3. For we should not count the forecasting of an event as an instance of *paranormal* cognition, unless we had convinced ourselves that the subject's success could not be accounted for either by his own inferences, or by his knowledge of inferences made by others, or by non-inferential expectations based on associations formed in his mind by repeated experiences of sequence in the past. Now in the case of such experiments as Dr. Soal's and Professor Rhine's all these kinds of explanation are ruled out by the design of the experiment. And in some of the best cases of sporadic precognition it seems practically certain that no such explanation can be given.

It seems to me fairly plain that the establishment of paranormal precognition requires a radical change in our conception of time, and probably a correlated change in our conception of causation. I do not believe that the modifications introduced into the notion of physical time and space by the Theory of Relativity are here relevant, except in the very general sense that they help to free our minds from inherited prejudices and to make us more ready to contemplate startling possibilities in this department. Suppose, e.g. that a person has an autoscopic paranormal precognition of some experience



which he will have some time later. I do not see that anything that the Theory of Relativity tells us about the placing and dating of physical events by means of measuring-rods and clocks regulated by light-signals can serve directly to make such a fact intelligible.

(2) Paranormal cognition which takes place under conditions which are telepathic but not precognitive does not conflict with Principles 1.1 and 4.3. But it does seem *prima facie* to conflict with Principle 4.2, and also with Principle 2, 1.3, and 3.

As regards Principle 4.2, we should not count *A*'s knowledge of a contemporary or past experience of *B*'s as paranormal, unless we had convinced ourselves that *A* had not acquired it by any of the normal means enumerated in that Principle. The same remarks apply *mutatis mutandis* to *A*'s acquiring from *B* knowledge of a fact known to the latter, or to *A*'s becoming aware of a proposition which *B* is contemplating. Now, in the experimental cases of simultaneous or post-cognitive telepathy all possibilities of normal communication are carefully excluded by the nature of the experimental arrangements. And in the best of the sporadic cases there seems to be no reasonable doubt that they were in fact excluded. In many well attested and carefully investigated cases the two persons concerned were hundreds of miles apart, and out of reach of telephones and similar means of long-distance communication, at the time when the one had an experience which corresponded to an outstanding and roughly contemporary experience in the other.

If non-precognitive telepathy is to be consistent with Principle 3, we must suppose that an immediate necessary condition of *A*'s telepathic cognition of *B*'s experience is a certain event in *A*'s brain. If it is to be consistent with Principle 2, we cannot suppose that this event in *A*'s brain is produced *directly* by the experience of *B* which *A* telepathically cognizes. For Principle 2 asserts that the only change in the material world which an event in a person's mind can *directly* produce is a change in that person's own brain. If, further, it is to be consistent with Principle 1.3, the event in *B*'s brain, which is the immediate consequence in the material world of his experience, cannot *directly* raise the event in *A*'s brain which is the immediate necessary condition of *A*'s telepathic cognition of *B*'s experience. For there is a spatial gap between these two brain-events; and Principle 1.3 asserts that a finite period must elapse and that this must be occupied by a causal chain of events occurring successively at a series of points forming a continuous path between the two events.

So, if non-precognitive telepathy is to be reconciled with Principles 3, 2, and 1.3 taken together, it must be thought of as taking place in the following way. *B*'s experience has as its immediate concomitant or consequence a certain event in *B*'s brain. This initiates some

kind of transmissive process which, after an interval of time, crosses the gap between *B*'s body and *A*'s body. There it gives rise to a certain change in *A*'s brain, and this is an immediate necessary condition of *A*'s telepathic cognition of *B*'s experience. I suspect that many people think vaguely of non-precognitive telepathy as a process somewhat analogous to the broadcasting of sounds or pictures. And I suspect that familiarity with the *existence* of wireless broadcasting, together with ignorance of the *nature* of the processes involved in it, has led many of our contemporaries, for completely irrelevant and invalid reasons, to accept the possibility of telepathy far more readily than their grandparents would have done, and to ignore the revolutionary consequences of the admission.

There is nothing in the known facts to lend any colour to this picture of the process underlying them. There is nothing to suggest that there is always an interval between the occurrence of an outstanding experience in *B* and the occurrence of a paranormal cognition of it in *A*, even when *B*'s and *A*'s bodies are very widely separated. When there is an interval there is nothing to suggest that it is correlated in any regular way with the distance between the two person's bodies at the time. This in itself would cast doubt on the hypothesis that, in all such cases, the interval is occupied by a causal chain of events occurring successively at a series of points forming a continuous path between the two places. Moreover, the frequent conjunction in experimental work of precognitive with non-precognitive telepathy, under very similar conditions, makes it hard to believe that the processes involved in the two are fundamentally different. But it is plain that the picture of a causal chain of successive events from an event in *B*'s brain through the intervening space to an event in *A*'s brain cannot represent what happened in *precognitive* telepathy. Then, again, there is no independent evidence for such an intermediating causal chain of events. Lastly, there is no evidence for holding that an experience of *B*'s is more likely to be cognized telepathically by *A* if he is in *B*'s neighbourhood at the time than if he is far away; or that the telepathic cognition, if it happens, is generally more vivid or detailed or correct in the former case than in the latter.

I do not consider that any of these objections singly, or all of them together, would conclusively disprove the suggestion that non-precognitive telepathy is compatible with Principles 3, 2, and 1.3. The suggested account of the process is least unpalatable when *B*'s original experience takes the form of a visual or auditory perception or image, and *A*'s corresponding experience takes the form of a visual or auditory image or hallucinatory quasi-perception resembling *B*'s in considerable detail. But by no means all cases of non-precognitive telepathy take this simple form.

I can imagine cases, though I do not know whether there are any well-established instances of them, which would be almost impossible to reconcile with the three Principles in question. Suppose, e.g. that *B*, who understands Sanskrit, reads attentively a passage in that tongue enunciating some abstract and characteristic metaphysical proposition. Suppose that at about the same time his friend *A*, in a distant place, not knowing a word of Sanskrit, is moved to write down in English a passage which plainly corresponds in meaning. Then I do not see how the physical transmission theory could be stretched to cover the case.

(3) If there be paranormal cognition under purely clairvoyant conditions, it would seem to constitute an exception to Principle 4.1. For it would seem to be analogous to normal perception of a physical thing or event, in so far as it is not conditioned by the subject's own future normal knowledge of that object, or by any other person's normal knowledge of it, whether past, contemporary, or future. And yet, so far as one can see, it is quite unlike ordinary sense-perception. For it does not take place by means of a sensation, due to the stimulation of a receptor organ by a physical process emanating from the perceived object and the subsequent transmission of a nervous impulse from the stimulated receptor to the brain.

To sum up about the implications of the various kinds of paranormal cognition. It seems plain that they call for very radical changes in a number of our basic limiting principles. I have the impression that we should do well to consider much more seriously than we have hitherto been inclined to do the type of theory which Bergson put forward in connection with *normal* memory and sense-perception. The suggestion is that the function of the brain and nervous system and sense-organs is in the main *eliminative* and not productive. Each person is at each moment potentially capable of remembering all that has ever happened to him and of perceiving everything that is happening anywhere in the universe. The function of the brain and nervous system is to protect us from being overwhelmed and confused by this mass of largely useless and irrelevant knowledge, by shutting out most of what we should otherwise perceive or remember at any moment, and leaving only that very small and special selection which is likely to be practically useful. An extension or modification of this type of theory seems to offer better hopes of a coherent synthesis of normal and paranormal cognition than is offered by attempts to tinker with the orthodox notion of events in the brain and nervous system *generating sense-data*.

Another remark which seems relevant here is the following. Many contemporary philosophers are sympathetic to some form of the so-called "verification principle," i.e., roughly that a synthetic proposition is significant if and only if we can indicate what kind

## RELEVANCE OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

of experiences in assignable circumstances would tend to support or to weaken it. But this is generally combined with the tacit assumption that the only kinds of experience which could tend to support or to weaken such a proposition are sense-perceptions, introspections, and memories. If we have to accept the occurrence of various kinds of paranormal cognition, we ought to extend the verification principle to cover the possibility of propositions which are validated or invalidated by other kinds of cognitive experience beside those which have hitherto been generally admitted.

*The less firmly established Results and the Basic Principles.* So far I have dealt with paramormal facts which have been established to the satisfaction of everyone who is familiar with the evidence and is not the victim of invincible prejudice. I shall end my paper by referring to some alleged paranormal phenomena which are not in this overwhelmingly strong position, but which cannot safely be ignored by philosophers.

(1) Professor Rhine and his colleagues have produced what seems to be strong evidence for what they call *psycho-kinesis* under experimental conditions. The experiments take the general form of casting dice and trying to influence by volition the result of the throw. Some of these experiments are open to one or another of various kinds of criticism; and, so far as I am aware, all attempts made in England to reproduce the alleged psycho-kinetic effect under satisfactory conditions have failed to produce a sufficient divergence from chance-expectation to warrant a confident belief that any paranormal influence is acting on the dice. But the fact remains that a considerable number of the American experiments seem to be immune to these criticisms, and that the degree of divergence from chance-expectation in these is great enough to be highly significant.

Along with these experimental results should be taken much more spectacular ostensibly telekinetic phenomena which are alleged to have been observed and photographed, under what seem to be satisfactory conditions, in presence of certain mediums. Perhaps the best attested case is that of the Austrian medium Rudi Schneider, investigated by several competent psychical researchers in England and in France between the first and the second world-wars.

We ought therefore to keep something more than an open mind towards the possibility that psycho-kinesis is a genuine fact. If it is so, we seem *prima facie* to have an exception to Principle 2. For, if psycho-kinesis really takes place in Rhine's experiments, an event in the subject's mind, viz., a volition that the dice shall fall in a certain way, seems to produce directly a change in a part of the material world outside his body, viz., in the dice. An alternative possibility would be that each of us had a kind of invisible and intangible but extended and dynamical "body," beside his ordinary

## PHILOSOPHY

visible and tangible body; and that it puts forth "pseudopods" which touch and affect external objects. (The results of Osty's experiments with Rudi Schneider provide fairly strong physical evidence for some such theory as this, however fantastic it may seem.)

(2) Lastly, there is the whole enormous and very complex and puzzling domain of trance mediumship and ostensible communications from the surviving spirits of specified persons who have died. To treat this adequately a whole series of papers would be needed. Here I must content myself with the following brief remarks.

There is no doubt that, amongst that flood of dreary irrelevance and high-falutin' twaddle which is poured out by trance-mediums, there is a residuum of genuinely paranormal material of the following kind. A good medium with a good sitter will from time to time give information about events in the past life of a dead person who claims to be communicating at the time. The medium may have had no chance whatever to gain this information normally, and the facts asserted may at the time be unknown to the sitter or to anyone else who has sat with the medium. They may afterwards be verified and found to be highly characteristic of the ostensible communicator. Moreover, the style of the communication, and the mannerisms and even the voice of the medium while speaking, may seem to the sitter to be strongly reminiscent of the ostensible communicator. Lastly, there are a few cases in which the statements made and the directions given to the sitter seem to indicate the persistence of an intention formed by the dead man during his lifetime but not carried out. There are other cases in which the ostensible communicator asserts, and the nature of the communications seems to confirm, that action is being taken by him and others at and between the sittings in order to provide evidence of survival and identity.

Some of the best cases, if taken by themselves, do strongly suggest that the stream of interconnected events which constituted the mental history of a certain person is continued after the death of his body, i.e., that there are *post-mortem* experiences which are related to each other and to the *ante-mortem* experiences of this person in the same characteristic way in which his *ante-mortem* experiences were related to each other. In most of these cases the surviving person seems to be communicating only indirectly through the medium. The usual dramatic form of the sitting is that the medium's habitual trance-personality, speaking with the medium's vocal organs, makes statements which claim to be reports of what the surviving person is at the time directly communicating to it. But in some of the most striking cases the surviving person seems to take control of the medium's body, to oust both her normal personality and her habitual

## RELEVANCE OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

trance-personality, and to speak in its own characteristic voice and manner through the medium's lips.

If we take these cases at their face value, they seem flatly to contradict Principle 3. For this asserts that every different mental event is immediately conditioned by a different brain-event, and that mental events which are so interconnected as to be experiences of the same person are immediately conditioned by brain-events which occur in the same brain.

But I do not think that we ought to take the best cases in isolation from the mass of mediumistic material of a weaker kind. And we certainly ought not to take them in isolation from what psychiatrists and students of abnormal psychology tell us about alternations of personality in the absence of paranormal complications. Lastly, we ought certainly to view them against the background of established facts about the precognitive, telepathic, and clairvoyant powers of ordinary embodied human beings. There is no doubt at all that the best phenomena of trance-mediumship involve paranormal cognition of a high order. The only question is whether this, combined with alternations of personality and extra-ordinary but not paranormal powers of dramatization, will not suffice to account for the phenomena which *prima facie* suggest so strongly that some persons survive the death of their bodies and communicate through mediums. This I regard as at present an open question.

In conclusion I would make the following remark. The establishment of the existence of various forms of paranormal cognition has in one way helped and in another way hindered the efforts of those who seek to furnish empirical proof of human survival. It has helped, in so far as it has undermined that epiphenomenalist view of the human mind and all its activities, which all other known facts seem so strongly to support, and in view of which the hypothesis of human survival is antecedently so improbable as not to be worth serious consideration. It has hindered, in so far as it provides the basis for a more or less plausible explanation, in terms of established facts about the cognitive powers of embodied human minds, of phenomena which might otherwise seem to require the hypothesis of survival.

## CAUSALITY, DETERMINISM AND PROBABILITY

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THE prediction of future events from our knowledge of past events is one of the main functions of Science. Such predictions are made possible by inferring causal relations between events from observed regularities. These relations are then codified into "laws of nature," and it is through knowledge of these laws that prediction becomes possible. The concept of "causal relation" is thus a fundamental one in the structure of science. Now recent advances in physics have led scientists to modify considerably their views of this concept. It has been found necessary to abandon the idea of rigidly deterministic causal relations, and substitute in its stead relations that are only determined with a certain degree of probability. The main purpose of this paper is to analyse the meaning of these changes in our concepts of causality.

The classical definition of a causal relation between an event C (the cause) and another event E (the effect) may be summarized in the sentence "whenever the cause C occurs, then the effect E follows," or briefly, "whenever C, then E." We notice that the word *whenever* in this definition implies that causal chains are *deterministic*. We also notice that the concept of causal relations in the physical world is inseparably tied up with the concept of space and time: we cannot define the former clearly without having previously defined the latter. To take the *simplest example*, that of events occurring at a single point in space, we cannot say that event C *causes* event E if C and E are simultaneous; the idea of a causal relation between two events occurring in the same place can be conceived only if these events are separated by an interval of *time*. If events C and E are separated in space as well, we must in addition take into account the way in which causal relation are transmitted through space; modern physics has abandoned the earlier idea that there can be simultaneous causal relations between events separated in space. One of the fundamental concepts derived from the theory of relativity is that causal relations will always travel through space with a finite velocity, smaller than or equal to the velocity of light. If we adopt for space and time the definitions rendered familiar by the special theory of relativity, we may say that in general a causal relation between two events can only be defined if these two events are separated by a "time-like" interval of *space-time*. Taking a particular Cartesian frame of reference in space-time, this interval will be

the system, such as its colours or electric charge, are irrelevant as far as mechanics is concerned. The charge, however, would be relevant in electrodynamics, where in addition the value of the electric and magnetic fields at every point of space would be required in order to specify the state at a given time. We may therefore say that in the theories of classical physics, a particular "causal chain" referring to a given "system" will be completely specified if all the variables required to specify the instantaneous "state" of the system are given as functions of time. The expression of such functions in a given problem is usually obtained as a solution of *differential equations*, i.e. relations expressing the rates of change of the dependent variables in terms of the forces, together with *boundary conditions*, i.e. values of the dependent variables given over certain regions of space and time.

Causal relations are synthetic propositions inferred by *induction* from observed regularities. There is no logical necessity that, as in the case of analytic propositions, they should always be true. The representation of causal chains by functional relations as described above corresponds to strictly deterministic processes, where the effect  $E$  follows whenever the cause  $C$  has occurred: this conception of causality is basic in classical physics. But we know of regularities where a number of events  $E$ , may possibly follow whenever an event  $C$  has occurred, each in a certain proportion of cases: e.g.  $E$ , may be the height of a child whose father is of height  $C$ . There is no guarantee that *all* our observed regularities may not be of this type, though this proportion may sometimes be so high for a given  $E$ , as so induce the illusion of a deterministic relation. It seems then advisable to extend our notion of causality to include relations of this type, i.e. to associate the notion of probability to that of causality. We thus replace the concept "whenever  $C$  then  $E$ " by "whenever  $C$ , then there is a well-defined probability  $P(E_i|C)$  that  $E_i$ ," where  $P(E_i|C)$  is a number between 0 and 1, and the sum of the probabilities of all possible "effects"  $E_i$  is 1. Such a concept is no longer associated with strict determinism. We call such a relation a probability or *stochastic causal relation*. Stochastic causal relations are the only ones accessible to us in practice, since the number of observations we can make is necessarily finite. If in a particular situation a large number of observations yield  $E$  whenever  $C$ , we may infer that  $P(E|C) = 1$ : this corresponds to the classical concept of deterministic causality, which is thus included as a special case in the more general concept of stochastic causality. Such an inference, however, can never be completely certain, since, as mentioned before, we cannot effect more than a finite number of observations, and hence there can be no absolute guarantee that  $E$  will always follow  $C$ .

We must now extend to this new type of stochastic causal relations



# CAUSALITY, DETERMINISM AND PROBABILITY

the analysis of causal relation in space-time previously made for the classical, deterministic type. We shall still want as before, to have causal chains extending in space-time; in order to define them mathematically, we have to generalize the ordinary notion of a function, and introduce the concept of a *stochastic* or *random* function of time. The variables characterizing each event become random variables, each with a number of possible values and with a well-defined probability number corresponding to any set of possible values of the variables. These probability values thus form an ordinary function of the possible values, which we call a probability distribution function. To each value of the "time," there will now correspond one such set of random variables, which we can think of as the dependent variables, thus defining random functions of the time. The corresponding probability distribution functions will then be ordinary functions of the time as well as of the possible values of the dependent random variables, and may serve to characterize the random function, and hence the causal chain.

Here again we may introduce the picture of a continuous transformation unfolding in time, but the relation between elements will be a relation of probability, not a strictly deterministic causal relation. We shall now say that the instantaneous state of a system is completely specified if we have the joint probability distribution of all the relevant variables. For example, in the direct generalization of classical mechanics, we shall require the joint distribution of all the coordinates and momenta of the components of a system (known as the "phase-space distribution"), to specify its (instantaneous) state. A "causal chain" will then be completely specified if we know these variables as random functions of the time or, what is equivalent, their joint probability distribution for any number of instants of time. As in the classical case, the random functions or their probability distribution functions, may be obtained in a given problem as solutions of differential equations with suitable boundary conditions.

The question arises: does the necessity for this probability type of causal relation arise only from our ignorance and human limitations, and is the underlying structure of the physical world essentially deterministic? Or does the physical world contain essentially non-deterministic elements? The implications of this question may be made clearer by reference to the position in classical physics and in quantum theory.

The view of the underlying structure of the physical world implicit in classical physics is essentially deterministic. At their most evolved stage, classical theories of physics consider matter as made up of elementary particles (atoms and molecules, electrons and protons) interacting through the intermediary of fields of force. The laws governing these interactions are the rigidly deterministic laws of

mechanics and electrodynamics. Statistical and probability considerations become necessary only when we consider large assemblies of such elementary particles, where we cannot keep track of all causes and effects, but only observe statistical regularities. The laws covering such statistical assemblies may still be expressed in terms of stochastic functions, but it is assumed here that their introduction is rendered necessary by our human limitations, and that the laws governing the behaviour of individual elementary particles remain deterministic. This branch of physics is called the classical kinetic theory of matter, or classical statistical mechanics.

E. T. Whittaker (1) has called statistical theories of this type *crypto-deterministic*. The question arises: how can we distinguish between crypto-deterministic and non-deterministic causal relations? It is necessary to define these notions more precisely. Let us assume that we have obtained the complete description of a given causal chain by means of a random function. In the limiting case of the rigid determinism of classical or relativistic mechanics, we should be able to infer all future values of the dependent variables from past observations of their values over some time interval, *however small*. Such a definition of determinism appears to be too narrow, and we may generalize it by calling deterministic any causal process where we can infer the future *exactly*, given *sufficient* information about the past. Mathematically, we shall say that a given random function and the causal process it defines is deterministic if, when the values of the dependent variables are known exactly over a *finite*, but *not necessarily small*, interval of time, future values, given this knowledge, cease to have an element of randomness and can be inferred exactly. This will hold even if we cannot in practice determine these values exactly by observation, because the property of determinism thus defined is a mathematical property of the random function, quite independent of the practical possibilities of observation. The description of a causal chain by such a random function will then mean that its underlying *structure* is deterministic, as distinct from limitations on our powers of observation. *Non-deterministic random functions* will then be functions where however long the time interval over which the dependent variable is determined, it is still not possible to predict future values exactly.

A good example of crypto-deterministic statistical theory is the classical kinetic theory of matter already referred to. The coordinates and momenta required in this theory to specify the state of a system are random functions of the time, which are crypto-deterministic in the above sense. However, even classical theories are not all deterministic: an example of one which is not, is the classical theory of the Brownian motion (due chiefly to Smoluchowsky and Einstein). This refers to the apparently random motion of small solid particles

suspended in a liquid or gas due to the numerous impacts on the particles by the molecules of the fluid. The particles, though very large as compared to the molecules, are still small enough for this motion to be observable through a microscope. The theory, which accounts satisfactorily for the observations, describes the motion of these Brownian particles in terms of random functions (viz. the co-ordinates and momenta of each Brownian particle) that are essentially non-deterministic in the sense of the mathematical definition given above. This may seem strange in view of the fact that the theory was originally developed within the framework of classical physics. The reason for this apparent paradox is the difference in scale between the Brownian particles and the bombarding molecules, owing to which it is possible to treat the impulses due to the latter as a completely random process, neglecting the fact that according to classical theories the motion of individual molecules is deterministic and continuous. According to classical notions, it would be more correct to describe the process by means of deterministic functions, but it is clear that such a description would be enormously more complicated, and would not give a better account of the facts of observation. We therefore see here that a non-deterministic theory may be more convenient on a certain scale (that of the Brownian particles) while a deterministic theory is held at the finer scale of molecular motion (classical kinetic theory).

We now come to quantum theory. In the classical theories of physics, statistical considerations are introduced in order to deal with large aggregates of elementary particles, but it is not thought that there are any essential theoretical limitations to the fineness of possible observations on the individual elementary particles. In quantum theory on the other hand, we have at the basis Heisenberg's *principle of uncertainty*, which by a close analysis of methods of observation shows that there are essential theoretical lower limits to the accuracy with which we can measure the dynamical variables (e.g. position and momentum) connected with the individual elementary particles. More precisely, the uncertainty principle formulates the disturbance of states by observations, by affirming that (a) it is impossible to measure simultaneously "complementary" or "non-commuting" variables, such as the position  $q$  and momentum  $p$  of a particle, and (b) that the more precisely we measure  $q$ , the less precisely can we predict  $p$ , i.e. the larger the spread of the probability distribution of  $p$ , and vice-versa. Hence, in contrast with classical theories, quantum theory is statistical in nature even when dealing with the motion of *single* particles.

In view of the limitations imposed by the uncertainty principle it is necessary to re-examine the meaning of the concept of causal relations in quantum theory before enquiring whether these relations

are "crypto-deterministic" or not. It has been stated that, owing to the uncertainty principle, quantum theory is not only non-deterministic, but also non-causal (cf. Reichenbach (2)). In fact the concept of stochastic causal relation as defined above applies (with certain restrictions) to quantum theory, provided we modify the classical definition of *state* of a dynamical system in such a way as to take into account the limitation imposed by the uncertainty principle and restrict ourselves to what is observable. In quantum theory, the instantaneous state of a system is considered to be completely defined if we know the *joint* probability distribution of any "maximal" set of variables (referring to the system) that are simultaneously observable; such a set must not therefore include both of any two complementary variables, such as the position and momentum of a particle. This definition of state is more restricted than the classical one. For example, in classical statistical mechanics, the state of a system is determined if we know the *joint* probability distribution of *all* the coordinates and momenta of its components; in quantum mechanics, since the coordinates and momenta of each particle are complementary, the state is completely defined if we know the *separate* distributions of the set of all coordinates, the set of all momenta, and any set of non-complementary coordinates and momenta (i.e. not belonging to the same particle). This means that less information is required than in the classical definition, because the probability dependence of complementary variables is not required. All the distributions needed to define a quantum mechanical state can be calculated by means of a single function  $\psi$ , known as the *wave-function* or *state-function* of the system. The variation of  $\psi$  with the time is given by a differential equation (the Schrodinger equation). By solving it, we obtain the value of  $\psi$  at any time in terms of given boundary conditions. We can thus calculate the distributions of the variables defining a state at any one time. In the analysis of causal chains given above, however, it was stated that their complete specification involved the knowledge of the joint distribution of the variables at any number of instants at the time. In quantum theory, this statement requires qualification: it is not possible to observe such distributions for more than one time, since the observation disturbs the state, so that we have a new state after each observation. Hence, if we are to limit ourselves to what is observable, we must consider that the causal chains are sufficiently specified if we know the distributions for any *one* time.

We see thus that though quantum mechanics can be considered as a causal theory in the stochastic sense, the question whether it is crypto-deterministic or not cannot however be answered unambiguously, because we must know the distributions at several instants of time in order to answer it. Such distributions may be introduced in

quantum theory as *definitions or conventions* referring to unobservable entities (cf. Reichenbach (3)). Any such convention will be valid, provided only that it is compatible with possible observations.

One way of introducing such conventions (Moyal (4)) is to *define* the joint distribution at one time  $F(p, q, t)$  for the coordinates  $q$  and the momenta  $p$  in terms of the  $\psi$  function: such a distribution is not directly observable (because  $p$  and  $q$  are complementary, and therefore not simultaneously observable) and is hence conventional. If this definition is accepted as an additional postulate in quantum theory, then one obtains a fairly complete parallelism with classical theories: the equations for  $\psi$  lead to equations for  $F(p, q, t)$  that are similar to those of the Brownian motion. It becomes possible to calculate the joint distribution (of  $p$ 's and  $q$ 's) at  $n$  instants of time and hence to specify causal chains as completely as in classical theories. The chains found thus are generally non-deterministic, but become crypto-deterministic for certain simple dynamical systems, such as free particles or harmonic oscillators.

In conclusion we may say that the deterministic or non-deterministic character of the mathematical models we use to describe the physical universe is essentially a matter of convenience in describing the facts of observation, and will depend largely on the possibility of making observations, and the scale at which our observations are carried out. This is especially the case when we are reaching far down into the domain of elementary particles: protons, neutrons, electrons and mesons, light quanta. The quantum principle of uncertainty has been rashly called in to justify non-deterministic views of philosophy at the human scale. We hope the foregoing discussion will have shown how irrelevant such an appeal is.

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# LIBERAL MORALITY AND SOCIALIST MORALITY

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*One Morality or many?* Liberal morality and Socialist morality; bourgeois morality and Georges Sorel's "morality of producers"; Protestant morality and Catholic; Greek morality and Christian; "aristocratic" morality and "slave" morality, "open" morality and "closed" morality—what, if any, is the relevance of such distinctions as these to moral philosophy?

Looked at from one angle they suggest something obvious enough; the fact that in different times and places different systems or aggregates of moral belief have prevailed, and the fact that sometimes in one and the same community different groups of people have adhered to different, in some cases to violently conflicting, moral beliefs. While no intelligent and informed person has ever denied these facts, moral philosophers have disagreed greatly as to their interpretation: I think, however, that their disagreements can be fairly summed up under the four following lines of interpretation.

First, what I shall call the "monarchic" view explains the existence of moral cleavages and conflicts in a very simple way. It points out that, although in every moral situation there is only one right judgment to be made or action to be chosen, yet the possibilities of moral error or failure are in every case enormous; and this simple fact explains all the real or basic differences in men's moral beliefs which history discloses. It may, of course, be granted on the monarchic view, that in any actual situation the right moral judgment or decision must take notice of many "non-moral" (factual) features of that situation, and that, since adequate knowledge of these is not always equally available to different (and let us assume equally conscientious) agents, apparent (but only apparent) moral disagreements may be inevitable between them. And it may further be granted that differences in the non-moral features of situations typical of two different communities, e.g. differences in respect of the experimental knowledge and administrative skill possessed by them, may be so great, and may affect all moral questions arising within either community so profoundly, that it is perfectly natural (though it can be dangerously misleading) to talk about two different moralities, and to label them with the names of the communities or types of community in which they are found. But these admissions, for the monarchic view, in no way alter the fact that the cardinal moral attributes, right and wrong, good and bad, etc.,

## LIBERAL AND SOCIALIST MORALITY

apply and apply univocally in every situation to which moral considerations are in any way relevant. Thus, on the monarchic view, it should be possible theoretically (for all that it is in fact causally impossible) for a Chinese gentleman of the fifth century B.C., an Athenian citizen of the same period, a medieval monk and a contemporary citizen of Ealing or Nijni-Norgorod, to settle down and reach agreed and valid conclusions as to the duties of *any* man in certain well-defined moral situations, e.g. to decide in what circumstances, if any, a man should actively resist the commands of his government. On the monarchic view, therefore, phrases such as Liberal morality and Socialist morality are ethically unimportant; since on this view moral philosophy is concerned only with those supreme moral principles and notions which are always applicable in no matter how widely divergent situations.

The monarchic view has, I think, been held by almost every great moral philosopher up to the present century. Certainly it possesses the attraction of logical simplicity and certain tonic properties highly relevant to moral practice; for, as a rule (though there is no logical necessity about this) adherents of the monarchic view assume that the particular moral beliefs to which they subscribe at least exemplify the one and only valid set of moral canons that exists; and surely no higher-order belief could be more important than this for inspiring and sustaining moral steadfastness. On the other hand, I must confess that the almost Augustinian exclusiveness of the monarchic view distresses me. Not so much because I dread being classed with the vast variety of moral goats who roam the wide pastures of error; nor yet because I think that adherents of the view are necessarily committed to a kind of higher-order self-righteousness: but rather because I suspect the parochial narrowness of their moral perspective. How often, I wonder, do adherents of the monarchic view reflect seriously on the range and variety of men's moral experience—from the men of Cro-Magnon to the present day? Moreover, I find highly suspicious the studied lack of interest, shown by most adherents of this view, to our rapidly accumulating knowledge of the different ways in which, in different communities, morality is learnt.

The second line of interpretation I call the polyarchic view. This, as its name suggests, stands in radical opposition to the monarchic view, maintaining that, far from there being one single set of valid moral standards, there are an indefinite number of these, embodied in different moralities whose cardinal principles are not mutually corrigible. Hence our previous happy picture of the Chinese Mandarin and his friends was a wholly misleading one; for the participants in the imaginary discussion would have been simply unable to comprehend each other's moral viewpoints. That there are and have been fundamentally different moralities is, for the polyarchic view,

no more suprising than that there are and have been *fundamentally* different forms of human community, and of human language, art, religion and education: forms so different, that is to say, that even the theoretical possibility of mutual correction and supplementation between them doesn't arise. Within any given morality, different commands, appeals, valuations, etc., may be criticized, may be compared and classified as absolute, conditional, etc.; but between different moralities—well, the commands simply don't carry, the appeals don't work, the valuations and judgments lose their singleness of meaning; consequently comparisons and classifications can be of interest only to ignorant busybodies.

Now this, the polyarchic view, suffers from lack of a distinguished ancestry, although I suspect that something of Aristotle's and much of Hume's view of morality might be retained within a polyarchic framework. Lack of long ancestry should not, however, be counted against the polyarchic view; since the considerations that lend it weight—mainly historical, anthropological and psychological—could hardly have suggested themselves before the nineteenth century. Among recent writers of repute, Bergson, Sorel and Santayana seem to me, in their different ways, to be polyarchic moralists. None of these writers, however, has paid anything like sufficient attention to the logical difficulties that their view involves: in particular the difficulty of deciding at what point divergences in moral practice and belief should be taken as signs of the existence of two or more distinct moralities. In general, it seems to me, the difficulty with the polyarchic view is not to defend it—it is easy enough to appreciate the strength of the evidence that *might* be brought forward in support of it: the difficulty is, rather, first to state it in consistent and logically manageable form, and, secondly, really to believe it, or to "live with it" if that expression may be allowed; since, if true, the polyarchic view means that we should abandon all hope of settling major moral disagreements by discussion. And this is a conclusion which I, for one, feel very uncomfortable about accepting.

The two remaining lines of interpretation can be dealt with more briefly. The first, ethical relativism, resembles the polyarchic view superficially, since it agrees that there are and have been different moralities which are not mutually corrigible; but, further, it maintains that different moralities are always relative to other and more basic differences between groups, communities, civilizations: they are relative to—and this I suppose means theoretically deducible from if not reducible to—differences in, for instance, experimental and historical knowledge, forms and traditions of tribal and national life, methods of organizing production and distribution of goods, and so on. In effect, then, ethical relativism can be considered as the



## LIBERAL AND SOCIALIST MORALITY

polyarchic view qualified (or perhaps we should say neutralized) by a very simple-minded and dogmatic theory of scientific and other forms of explanation. From the point of view of theoretical ethics, therefore, ethical relativism is not of great importance: it involves all the difficulties of the polyarchic view, and others which call for criticism from logic and metaphysics rather than from ethics. From the practical standpoint, however, ethical relativism is of the first importance; since one extreme and widely accepted form of it is Marxism.

Lastly, we have the Idealist interpretation which represents morality as essentially one and absolute and eternal, and yet such that it inevitably differentiates itself into radically conflicting forms or phases. Happy reconciliation, it might seem, of the monarchic and polyarchic views, each of which has such obvious attractions and at the same time such apparently inescapable defects. But, alas, few competent thinkers to-day would be willing to accept the arguments (if this word can be used) by which Hegel and his followers advanced their at once uplifting and comfortable conclusions. I mention the Idealist view, however, because it may, however obliquely, throw light on what has become, in my belief, the most important problem facing moral philosophy to-day. Namely: How, or on the basis of what sorts of consideration, should we seek to decide between the monarchic and the polyarchic view of moral differences? Or, more simply, Is Morality one or many?

Recent writers on ethics, it seems to me, have either shirked this question or tried to approach it along altogether unpromising lines. For the last four decades the ablest moral philosophers, in this country at any rate, have been preoccupied almost exclusively with certain problems in the "logic of ethics": questions as to the definability or indefinability of key ethical expressions, and as to the possibility, or "correctness," in any language, of combining certain ethical expressions or of analysing certain of these in terms of certain others. Some of these questions are of great logical interest; but if anyone has thought that answers to any of them would suffice to answer our question, "One morality or many?" then he was certainly mistaken; and if anyone makes the milder claim that answers to the above questions are a necessary prerequisite of answering our question, I would say that he is very probably mistaken. My reason for saying this is simply that the "logic of ethics" is, like all logic, concerned solely with consistency and inconsistency of meanings and usages—and is concerned, in particular, with meanings and usages used within a given language *to express a given morality*: it is powerless to decide whether or not different languages, or for that matter any one language, can be used to express a number of different moralities. The question, One morality or many?—in this like the

questions, One time-series or many? One God or many? One set of aesthetic values or many?—being a question of fact, is one that no amount of logical analysis can ever possibly decide.

What the true answer to this question is I do not know, and what suggestions I could put forward as to the way we should set about trying to answer it are at once vague and unconfident. What perhaps I can do usefully, and shall now attempt, is to suggest how one illustrative instance of it should be presented, so as to serve as starting-point for more ambitious discussion. I ask: Do we, in this country to-day, subscribe to two distinct moralities which might reasonably be labelled Liberal and Socialist? This is my question; but the bulk of what I have to say will be aimed at showing that this question is a real and intelligible one.

### *The Liberal-Socialist Conflict*

We have certainly been told by a number of eminent politicians that behind our present political divisions there lie certain fundamental differences in moral outlook. To be sure, those who tell us this (chiefly from the ranks of anti-Socialist parties) would claim that there is in fact only one true morality, viz. "liberal morality"; just as those who deny it (chiefly from the Socialist ranks) would claim that socialist policies *in this country at any rate* are quite compatible with that liberal morality, and are indeed the best means of implementing or "fulfilling" it. But we should not take too seriously this preference, on the part of active politicians, for the monarchic view; for when our politicians assert or deny a fundamental cleavage in our moral aims and standards they are almost certainly *thinking* of a cleavage by classes, or at least by "pressure-groups." This, however, is not the only form that a fundamental moral cleavage might take. Why shouldn't it exist *within* each one of us? Why shouldn't each one of us, in some degree, be internally divided, pulled this way and that on different issues by the claims and counter-claims of two conflicting moralities? The moral and political heritage of our nation makes this suggestion, to my mind, an extremely plausible one. In this country we have a long tradition of letting the other side have its say, and of combining hard-hitting debate with the attempt to understand our opponent's point of view. Thus, assuming that our two (presumptive) moralities have been continuously expressed, however imperfectly and inconsistently, in public debate and discussion over the last seventy odd years, what could be more natural than that the main claims and tenets of each of them—and more, the main springs of appeal and inspiration peculiar to each—should have passed into all or most of us, unobtrusively and perhaps even insensibly, in the course of our education, reading, and day-to-day

## LIBERAL AND SOCIALIST MORALITY

discussion of political and moral issues? Anyhow, in what follows I am going to assume that any fundamental moral cleavage in *this* country, as between Liberal and Socialist aims and standards, is such that its results are to be found within individuals quite as much as between different groups or classes of individuals.

Two other preliminary points may be made here. Obviously by the choice of the names Liberal and Socialist I intend that my two (to repeat, presumptive) moralities are intimately connected with a familiar political division. Liberal morality, if it exists as a distinct morality, must be primarily a political morality, i.e. its central principles must be concerned with the relations of State and citizen; and similarly with Socialist morality. But if either in fact deserves the name of a morality it must evidently extend, or be in the process of extending, to other moral issues which would not ordinarily be said to have any close connection with politics. That this is the case—that the principles of liberal morality, for instance, could be disclosed in fields as different as family relations, industrial relations, educational and cultural ideals—could, I think, be quite plausibly suggested. But to elaborate such ideas would be a secondary task and one that I cannot attempt in the present paper. On the other hand, it might reasonably be admitted, by anyone asserting the existence of our two moralities, that a number of moral principles and beliefs (for instance, certain parts of our sexual morality) are such that they can easily be incorporated within both our moralities—without, however, destroying their distinctness. The principle of monogamy, and the incest taboo, are obvious examples.

But, secondly, because of the long continuous tradition of our political and social institutions in this country, it is natural to assume that our two moralities may be even more intimately related. And in fact, it seems to me, that Socialist morality (as I shall represent it) arises from a protest, an almost unwilling protest, against the practical inadequacies of liberal morality, from which it retains—or perhaps we should say takes for granted—certain very important moral principles. For this reason the issue which I have chosen to illustrate the question, *One morality or many?* may seem an unfortunate and muddling one. Would it not have been better to choose, for illustrative purposes, the unmistakable conflict between our so-called Western morality and the morality that prevails in Communist countries? The difficulty about this suggestion is to know what Communist morality is or is like. (Some of us, no doubt, would deny that there is any such thing, would claim that Communism is an a-moral, if not anti-moral, political doctrine.)<sup>1</sup> And the same kind of

<sup>1</sup> I am convinced that this view is wrong. A morality of a kind exists—i.e. calls out genuinely conscientious effort and action—in Communist countries. And perhaps some of us *do* know what it is like—if, that is, we met during

difficulty would arise if we were to select for comparison and contrast the moralities of two civilizations widely separate in respect of scientific knowledge and administrative skill. On the whole, it is best to begin by considering a conflict of moralities which (as I hope to show can plausibly be held) may well exist at our own doorstep. We can thus be reasonably confident that we know what we are talking about; and may thus get a somewhat clearer appreciation of what polyarchic moralists are talking about, when they insist on the distinctness of different moralities.

How, then, should we try to articulate the hypothesis of the Liberal-Socialist conflict? The best way I can think of is this: I shall try to set out very briefly, for comparison and contrast, the different meanings which three cardinal moral notions, those of justice, liberty and good government, might reasonably be expected to possess within our two moralities, assuming that they exist. And in doing this I shall for simplicity write, in the sections that follow, as though I were fully convinced (as in fact I am not) that Liberal morality and Socialist morality really do exist and conflict in our society, and indeed in each one of us.

### *Justice, Liberty and Good Government according to Liberal Morality*

(1) For Liberal Morality justice is essentially a *commutative* conception, grounded on the familiar claim that rewards or returns should be proportional to merit. This claim is recognized by men whenever they co-operate, be their motives for co-operation never so selfish: indeed recognition of it is perfectly compatible with (some would say, is necessarily involved in) a reasoned egoism. The ideas of distributive and retributive justice presuppose the notion of commutation: for instance, in the economic field the idea of fair shares and fair compensation presupposes the idea of a fair or open market in which the relative merits of different products and services are gauged.

For Liberal Morality, then, justice consists primarily in those arrangements whereby the meritorious individual, wherever his work or services are publicly available, shall receive back his (commutative) due.

(2) Commutative justice is best assured when each individual is left free to decide in what ways he will use his own capacities and property, subject to the proviso that *his* way shall not prevent others from using their capacities and property in *their* ways; and evidently the system of free contract is an admirable device for ensuring this

childhood with that morality in which "being good" means being obedient, working hard, and in particular saying to strangers only the things we have been told to say to them.

## LIBERAL AND SOCIALIST MORALITY

result wherever men choose to divide and "mix" their labour. But this account and defence of individual liberty is inadequate, since it presents liberty as a purely instrumental value, a means of achieving commutative justice. The fact is that the idea of commutative justice logically *requires* that the individual shall be a freely choosing agent: otherwise our ideas of the meritorious individual and of rewards proportional to merit would lose an essential part of their meaning. Liberal morality requires that each of us shall be left free to market or canvass his wares (be they material or intellectual, political or religious) and on *this* condition get back what returns our wares are proved to deserve. Thus, liberty, for Liberal Morality, means primarily liberty to get what one deserves.

Lest this should seem an unpleasantly hard-headed conception, it may be recalled that Liberal Morality is concerned with men's recognizable claims on one another, not with liberty as an abstract or poetic ideal: it is concerned with those claims that can justify themselves competitively, or, more generally, with claims that deserve to be taken seriously. Freedom, for Liberal Morality, emphatically does not mean, for instance, freedom to live on the back of the community.

(3) For Liberal Morality the main functions of a good Government are negative and preventive, e.g. defence of country and protection of life and property. The positive function of government is to safeguard the greatest possible freedom of choice for every citizen; and probably the best way of doing this is to facilitate and simplify the making of free contracts and to enforce these once they are made. (This is perhaps the main reason why Liberal Morality, while admitting that capacity and property—and hence returns on these—may always be unequal between different individuals, insists so emphatically on the principle of equality before this law.)

These limitations on the scope of government are usually urged by Liberals on grounds of efficiency, but they can also be defended on specifically moral grounds. In the first place, "If legislation interferes in a direct manner, it must be by punishment":<sup>1</sup> but punishment can be morally defended only when there is *already* an offence against the right of the individual to use his capacity and property in his own way. Extension of legislation, however, beyond the tasks already mentioned, inevitably eats into the field in which the individual can exercise this right. To look at the matter from another angle, whenever Governments engage in creative, productive tasks, a number of individuals are not only deprived of their liberty to produce and create but, since their work is now directed by Government (under the threat of punishment), they are deprived of one of the main conditions of moral dignity, viz. the chance of rewards

<sup>1</sup> Bentham.

that will measure the wisdom of their choices and the consistency of their efforts. Thus, whether or not socialistic legislation must result in political tyranny, it will inevitably produce a kind of moral suffocation. Such legislation is always to be resisted, perhaps especially when it is defended under such pretty names as "action in accordance with the general will" or "collective action."

I can only hope that the above "interpretations" of justice, liberty and good government suggest the kernel of something that can reasonably be named Liberal Morality. Evidently this kernel is made up of four closely interweaving notions: those of justice as primarily commutative, of individual merit, of freedom of choice and contract as morally defensible (indeed as morally necessary) and of the self-limiting character of good government. We shall see how each of these notions, as asserted in Liberal Morality, is not only contradicted but opposed in the most radical manner in Socialist Morality. But before turning to this I want to revert for a moment to my earlier statement that Socialist Morality arises from a "Socialist Protest" against the inadequacies of Liberal Morality. This protest is lodged largely on *factual* grounds. Thus it complains that the Liberal account of justice is defective or misleading since it suggests that the capacities and property of different individuals are either things given by Nature or else in some way "meritoriously owned"; whereas, in fact, property—and hence to some extent capacity—are usually the result of inheritance. Similarly, it is protested that the system of free contract does not in fact always or even usually result in the greatest possible fairness in rewards. And, again, it can be argued that the Liberal account of good government rests on the factual (but false) assumption that no important improvements in governmental machinery can ever be devised, and hence that all government or collective action must remain, basically, of a restrictive and repressive kind. It is unnecessary to elaborate these protests which have been repeated so often in Socialist literature. It is important, however, to bear them in mind, for they help to explain, or at least to mitigate, some of the more surprising—at first sight more "starry-eyed" and unrealistic—features of Socialist Morality.

### *Justice, Liberty and Good Government according to Socialist Morality*

For Socialist Morality justice is essentially a distributive, not a commutative conception. Nor is it based on any of the *actual* claims men make, or have made on one another in respect of, fair rewards and returns; for all such claims are subject to the taint of non-moral self-interests and pressures, whether from individuals or groups. Justice, like all other strictly moral notions, is derived from an ideal

## LIBERAL AND SOCIALIST MORALITY

—conceived as realizable in the future and already in some measure affecting men's aspirations—an ideal state of affairs in which moral claims would act as motives entirely without the taint of self-interest. Such is the ideal of Socialist society in which men would co-operate for two main motives: first, to ensure an adequate material basis of life for all, this being conceived as an absolute moral duty; and second, to ensure for all those freedoms which a good or "truly human" life requires. Absolute or ideal justice can be achieved only in Socialist society, which indeed is the embodiment of justice: relative justice, in the meanwhile, consists in those arrangements and policies which aim at realizing the Socialist ideal.

On this view the claims of commutative justice are not forgotten; on the contrary, they are explicitly rejected as misnomers. That men have always desired rewards proportional to merit may be admitted; and that legal recognition of this desire, in certain societies, has contributed to rapid economic advances, may also be admitted. But these admissions do nothing to establish the moral defensibility of the desire or its recognition. In its cruder forms (e.g. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth") the idea of commutation is a morally repulsive one; in more refined forms, e.g. the puritanical quest of rewards for personal merit, it is hardly less objectionable—the old Adam of egoism rationalized into respectability.

(2) The idea of commutative justice being rejected, it is clear that the Liberal defence of freedom of choice and contract—generalized in the conception of freedom to get what one deserves—makes no appeal whatever to Socialist Morality. What, then, are the freedoms which Socialist morality finds necessary to a good or truly human life? It may be noticed, in the first place, that the freedoms to which Liberal Morality gives most attention—freedom of contract and freedom of speech and expression—are of particular interest to three classes of men: entrepreneurs, professional consultants, and "intellectuals." But there are, of course, other freedoms which members of these favoured classes usually enjoy—indeed enjoy so plentifully that they usually take their existence for granted—but of which the great mass of men are only too often deprived: in particular the freedoms associated with leisure, freedom to obtain disinterested knowledge, to cultivate tastes of one's own, freedom—or the genuine opportunity—to enjoy one's friendships and family-life; in general, that freedom which consists in moral elbow-room, in the sense of having a life of one's own: freedom to *be*—whatever is worth being for its own sake, rather than freedom to *get*—that so-called "fair reward," which is too often got by snatching it from under the nose of one's neighbour. This freedom, freedom to *be*, cannot be legislated into existence; but it is our duty to ensure by whatever means we can devise, that the most obvious obstacles to it shall be removed.

Among these are the economic waste and insecurity involved in every form of competitive (liberal) economy.

The ideals of freedom of thought and expression, like the principle of equality before the law, are things which Socialist Morality gratefully takes over from Liberal Morality; but with the reflection that these principles point beyond the narrow confines in which that morality sets them. It is the privilege of Socialist Morality not simply to inherit these principles, but to generalize and fulfil them. (The great error of Liberal Morality was to consider them as so sacrosanct or so invulnerable that it would be either blasphemous or useless to examine, and with a view to ensuring, their conditions: this being only one example of the Liberal's failure to see that unless men deliberately control the blind aggregate of social forces, these forces will certainly control *them*.).

(3) Legislation in Socialist society, and the kinds of legislation that will bring this society into being, will inevitably be concerned with the direction of economic life. The merits of a socialized economy are commonly urged in terms of efficiency, e.g. the elimination of competitive waste; and the relevance of this line of argument to the Socialist conception of freedom we have already seen. But the moral case for socialized production and distribution can be argued more directly. First, since the provision of material sufficiency for all is an absolute duty, binding on each one of us, we cannot leave its fulfilment to the enterprise—or lack of enterprise—of a number of individuals using their resources in ways that *they* think best. Each one of us, on the contrary, is morally obliged to demand and, when it is established, to support and serve the kind of organization that can fulfil this first demand of Socialist Morality. But secondly, suppose a collective economy in existence and actually meeting this demand: would not this fact be an inspiration to a new kind of "moral solidarity" that could afford to tolerate—and more, to welcome and foster—such freedom, spontaneity and variety in the lives and tasks of our fellows as are necessary for their enjoyment of a "truly human" life? Thirdly, a more speculative defence. We all know that certain values and virtues cannot in strictness be counted individual possessions, since they exist only *between* individuals, in friends, marriages, clubs, schools, communities, communions, etc.; now it may well be that a more collective way of living would bring new values of this sort to light, as, for instance, Georges Sorel believed.

Acceptance of these arguments does not mean that we can afford to neglect Liberal warnings of the dangers of excessive or precipitate Government action. Political tyranny and moral suffocation are things which Socialist Morality, more perhaps than any other morality, must abhor, since its aim is to bring into being a society



## LIBERAL AND SOCIALIST MORALITY

in which moral motives (including love of freedom) will govern men's actions to an extent never before known. And for this reason it is evident that Socialist society can never be brought into existence by force, or even legislated into existence without a continuous effort of persuasion and example.

That this Socialist interpretation of justice, liberty and good government stands in sharp and to all appearances systematic conflict with the Liberal interpretation seems to me perfectly clear. The kernel ideas of Liberal Morality, commutative justice, the meritorious individual, the moral necessity of free choice and contract (especially in economic life) and the self-limiting character of good government are countered by the ideas of distributive justice, the contributing individual, freedom as essentially freedom to *be* not to get, and collective action in economic affairs. It is as if the parable of the talents were countered by the parable of the vineyard. If space permitted, it would no doubt be interesting to go over these crucial points of conflict in more detail, and to suggest further causes and bring out further consequences of them. And it would be of great topical interest to outline a contemporary "Liberal protest" to the practical inadequacies of Socialist Morality as outlined above. But to attempt either of these things would be premature. The purpose of the comparisons just made was simply to expand our hypothesis, of two distinct moralities conflicting in our society, to the point at which we can begin to ask, knowing sufficiently what we mean by it, Is this hypothesis true? and, as a necessary correlate of this question, By what methods can we verify or refute it?

*Methods of Verification.*—Three methods seem possible. First, we might examine the immediate political scene in this country and ask whether, for instance, the present course of Socialist legislation expresses or appears to be based on Socialist Morality as outlined above? But the course of legislation in this country has seldom or *never been explicable in terms of a single set of principles, moral or economic*; we pride ourselves on our political empiricism, realism, opportunism even. Besides, every Government of a nation is bound to legislate to a pattern of national interests, standards and traditions, with which its own party principles must somehow accommodate themselves. This line of verification, therefore, seems a rather unpromising one

Suppose, however, we were to look at the writings of such great moralists and political thinkers as we ordinarily label Liberal and Socialist; should not the general views and most celebrated dicta of Bentham and Stuart Mill, say, and, on the other side, of Robert Owen, William Morris and the Fabian theorists, provide clear evidence

for or against our hypothesis? But, if I was right in suggesting that the Liberal-Socialist conflict works *within* most of us, then we should expect that the writers I have just mentioned—prescient and morally sensitive men as most of them were—would also have been in some degree affected by it. And that this was the case with Bentham and Mill and, on the other side, with most of the Fabians, could, I think, be very plausibly maintained. On the other hand, these great men all wrote in the express *belief* that there is only one true morality, which everyone will come to recognize if only it is presented clearly enough and reiterated often enough. Consequently it would be idle to look for exact confirmation of our hypothesis in their actual dicta or arguments.

Since these two methods fail, it might be suggested that we should look into our hearts—or examine our consciences—with a view to finding there evidence for or against our hypothesis. But I doubt whether ours is the kind of question in which the answers of the heart or conscience are of much value. I can well imagine a man looking into his heart, in an hour of great bitterness, and saying with a kind of truth, "I acknowledge no moral obligations" or "Nothing matters." And I can imagine a man, suddenly awakened from moral torpor or scepticism, saying on the same kind of evidence, "Well, at least I acknowledge *some* moral obligations" or "*Some* things matter." But that a man should be able to decide, on the direct evidence of his heart or conscience, that his moral beliefs and dispositions fall into two or more radically conflicting systems—this seems to me most unlikely. A decision of this kind could hardly result from direct self-examination: our moral self-divisions are revealed, if they are revealed anywhere, "written large," in the old Socratic phrase, in the world of action and controversy.

Following the lead of this criticism we reach a fourth suggestion: that our hypothesis can best be tested by examining, with all the logical rigour we can command, our own serious discussions of current moral issues, in the first instance those that have a close bearing on political morality. (For instance, the "closed shop" issue, the rights of scientists to make public their findings, the rights and duties of parents in the education of their children.) And my guess is that if we examined our actual discussions of these questions we should find that the more we endeavour to reach important, well-informed and consistent decisions on them, the more we are subject to a tantalizing and exhausting pull and counter-pull of opposing claims and standards, very like those which I have attributed to Liberal and to Socialist Morality. But one man's guess on this matter isn't even a first step to real verification. Is the proposal, then, that we should organize a nation-wide chain of conscientious discussion groups, to be polled, at some appointed date, by Dr. Gallup and his

friends? This suggestion is perhaps not quite so silly as some moralists would have us believe; but I admit that it would be pretty useless, unless and until an effective way of directing and presenting the discussions had been agreed to. And how should agreement be reached on this initial, and quite crucial, question?

But, conceivably, Art might here come to our aid where Social Science fails us. Suppose, for instance, one were given a dialogue to read; and suppose that in it there were represented, through the words of artistically well chosen (i.e. for the purpose in hand, representative) characters, the course of a discussion on any serious moral issue of the day. And let us suppose that the questions and answers of the main characters betrayed a kind of systole-diastol movement in allegiance to the claims now of Liberal, now of Socialist Morality. The results reached in the discussion would be of minor importance. doubtless every participant in it would be represented as coming down on one side of the fence or the other, from sheer exhaustion, or from the natural desire to take up and stick to some definite position or to ground that position on some plausible general theory. The important thing would be the movement, the oscillation, betrayed by every character in some degree, from one moral position to the other. Let us further suppose that the dialogue to bring out very clearly that this oscillation is not due to mere logical wooliness or moral spinelessness. On the contrary, we may imagine that it is precisely the most morally earnest and intellectually persistent and incisive of the participants that display (somewhat in the manner of Glaucon and Adeimantus in the *Republic*) the painful duality of their moral beliefs and allegiances.

And now I ask: Would not the intelligent reader of such a dialogue be able to say on reflection whether it was true of his own moral experience? I think he would be able to. I don't say that his judgment on this matter would be infallible or that, whichever way it went, it would be sufficient to decide the question "One morality or many?" but it would be a first step towards answering this question. If our reader decided that the dialogue was true to his own experience, he would possess some initial evidence in favour of a polyarchic interpretation of his moral experience; while, if he found it untrue, this discovery would at once illuminate and, indirectly, strengthen his adherence to a monarchic interpretation.

On the former alternative, our reader would, if at all scientifically minded, proceed to look for further consequences of his (apparent) moral division. He might recall, in the first place, that if most of us are subject to chronic moral frictions and frustrations, we should, on the master hypothesis of modern psychology, expect a consequent falling-off in our effective moral energy and enthusiasm. This, to be sure, is a very vague suggestion which, until specified further, we

could hardly hope to verify. It might be suggested, then, that in a society whose members are becoming increasingly aware of a lack of uniform moral standards we should naturally expect the following broad division of moral types: on the one hand unreliable opportunists and shilly-shallyers (who might nevertheless retain, in emergencies, considerable moral resilience); and on the other hand, conscientious, heavy-hearted individuals, who suffer the pull and counter-pull of the conflicting standards they seek vainly to serve together and who, in consequence, are too often practically inept and unadaptable. And I will risk saying that, in my experience, this division holds true in alarming measure in this country to-day. But secondly, with regard to these conscientious, heavy-hearted individuals we might expect a second consequence; we might expect them to be unhealthily shy—one might almost say prudish—about expressing publicly their strongest moral convictions and to wince away both from popular statements of "what every good Britisher stands for" and from the serious (if crude) probings and challenges of contemporary moral evangelists. And I think that few intelligent observers of our present-day society can have failed to notice these traits in a great many of the best, most conscientious individuals they know. Thirdly, following the same psychological lead, we should all of us tend to show at our best, when our attention is directed away from those issues that evoke our condition of conflict—issues that arise whenever we concentrate on setting our own house in order: in other words, we should show at our best when on the defensive, when our whole way of life—internal conflicts and frustrations and all—is threatened by forces which we all consider alien or evil or both.

And in fact most of us do know pretty clearly what we are *against*, and know how to stand up to it. It is when we have to state—or, perhaps more, when we have to listen to—what we are *for*, that our utterances and reactions lack singleness, force and style. Inner conflicts, frictions, frustrations, dissociations even—these can be temporarily overcome when our whole way of life is threatened. But remove the threat, and the conflicts, with their dismal consequences, return.

*Concluding Remarks.*—What I have tried to do in this paper is to urge the importance for moral philosophy of certain facts which, no matter how difficult they are to describe, classify and interpret, do give the polyarchic view of moral differences what plausibility it possesses. And I would urge all adherents to the monarchic view to give these facts their most careful attention; and more, to give the polyarchic interpretation of them—considered as an hypothesis—a fair run for its money. For instance, with regard to the Liberal-

## LIBERAL AND SOCIALIST MORALITY

Socialist conflict as I have presented it, it seems to me simply useless to say that evidently both sides cannot be right in all they claim, though both may be wrong, but that much the most likely explanation of the conflict is that both sides are right in some of their claims and wrong in others. For this simple-minded solution neglects entirely the systematic character of the conflict. It is not a conflict at one point only (as are most of the conflicts of *prima facie* duties discussed in contemporary ethics), but at a number of intimately related points: conflict along a whole front, so to say. More generally—and more audaciously—I would urge that the monarchic view of moral differences deserves to be taken seriously from now onwards only in so far as it is prepared to meet and counter the polyarchic view on the latter's own ground. Moreover I would say that this means a pretty well continuous task for adherents to the monarchic view: they must be prepared to examine carefully and fairly any facts, arising from whatever quarter, that can reasonably suggest the existence of two or more conflicting moralities, with their own autonomous, i.e. not mutually corrigible, aims and standards.

Whether the monarchic view could sustain this task I do not know. I will only say here that, in my opinion, it would be quite possible for adherents to the monarchic view to hold that single, absolute morality admits—and perhaps requires—unbridgeable conflicts and cleavages between equally conscientious people on *certain* moral issues. But to say that this is possible is a very different thing from showing, in terms of actual moral conflicts which we can all recognize as important, that this situation obtains; and to show this would, I think, call for an infinitely deeper, more searching examination and illumination of moral life than has been attempted by any moral philosopher in the last hundred years.

This brings me to the last remark I wish to make. I have said that the question "One morality or many?" is the most important question facing moral philosophy to-day; and the methods of investigation I have been suggesting are of course aimed at settling this crucial question, however slowly and painfully. But now it seems perfectly clear to me that the value of a moral philosophy lies less in the conclusions it reaches (and the logic by which it reaches them) than in something which it achieves as it goes along: something which I can only describe as *illumination of moral life*. This again, I must admit, is a wretchedly vague phrase; but perhaps I can show what I mean by it by saying that it is the function which, to this day, Plato's moral philosophy discharges far more adequately than any other. Plato's dialogues do not explicitly describe, but they do nevertheless illuminate in a remarkable way the moral world of his contemporaries. That moral world is a vastly different one from our own; and yet it is curiously familiar—we can find our way about it,

so to speak, with a surprising confidence. Now I believe that some of the methods I have suggested—in particular concentration on current issues relating closely to political morality, and the possibilities of a new kind of discussion aimed at unmasking fundamental differences rather than at reaching superficial agreement—*might* do something towards illuminating our contemporary moral world: *might* help to dispel that thin but bewildering fog which seems to surround so much current ethical discussion and to make its terms and distinctions so unearthly and unreal. This at least is my hope, and my suggestion to those who have that rare combination of gifts which the practice of moral philosophy requires.

Each may think for himself what those qualities are and whether he possesses them.

## THE MORAL SITUATION

N. H. G. ROBINSON, D.Litt.

MODERN ethics has been chiefly concerned with the analysis of the conditions and principles of morality; and, in particular, one of its most important achievements has been the further elucidation of the Kantian *dictum* that "I ought" implies that I can.<sup>1</sup> On the face of it Kant's contention seems perfectly straightforward, but, on examination, it becomes apparent that the simple word "can" covers a somewhat complicated ambiguity. When it is said that I ought to do act A, it may rightly be taken that I *can* do act A; but the question arises whether or not this in turn involves that I am aware that I can do act A. There is clearly some significance in the assertion that I *can* do many acts which, however, never occur to me, either because I am ignorant of certain facts or because I have a mistaken opinion about the facts. On the other hand, it may quite properly be said that I *cannot* perform any act of the possibility of which I am unaware. The problem then is to determine and examine the sense of the word "can" which is a pre-condition of moral obligation.

Now part of the solution of this problem lies in the distinction, emphasized by recent ethical thought, between the subjective and the objective situations.<sup>2</sup> These are always different, for the latter is the situation confronting the agent as it really is, while the former is the same situation as it appears to the agent. Clearly, the objective situation will always be fuller and more extensive than the subjective, for no human agent is ever cognisant of all the facts. Moreover, frequently, the two situations will be at variance in certain respects, for error and mistaken opinion are common features of our apprehension of what really is. Further, it can only be with regard to the subjective situation that the agent acts, for he cannot possibly act with regard to those aspects of the objective situation which distinguish it from the subjective. The question is, however, From which situation does the man's *duty* arise, and with reference to which is he morally obliged?

So far as the subjective situation covers the same ground as the objective situation, that is, so far as any difference between them is due, not to the agent's ignorance, but to his mistaken opinion about the facts, the matter seems simple and straightforward enough. Even if within this area the subjective situation is at variance with the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. D. Lewis: *Morals and the New Theology*, pp. 35-37.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. H. A. Pritchard: *Duty and Ignorance of Fact*, W. D. Ross: *Foundations of Ethics*, Ch. VII.

objective in several respects that fact presents no difficulty. No matter how much it may conflict with the facts as they really are, the subjective situation, after all, is simply the objective situation *as the agent sees it*; and, since he sees it in the way he does, he cannot be expected to act with regard to the situation, not as he sees it, but as in fact it really is. It seems certain that the agent's duty is to deal with the situation as it appears to him, and it seems nonsense to suggest that his duty may be to deal with the situation as if it possessed characteristics contrary to those he takes it to possess. Moreover, this conclusion holds whether the agent's thinking which is possibly mistaken is non-moral thinking about the objective facts of the situation or moral thinking about the moral importance of these facts. In either case he must deal with the situation as he sees it. No doubt, since, generally speaking, the moral situation is that an agent is confronted by facts which may belie his opinion of them, every agent has always a duty to entertain as accurate an opinion of the facts as he possibly can; but, given that he has reached some conclusion concerning the facts, there seems no doubt that in any situation his duty must be, or rather must involve, dealing with the situation as he sees it.

The case, however, is not so simple when we pass from those aspects of the subjective situation in which it covers the same ground as the objective (though possibly conflicting with it in several respects within that area) to those aspects of the subjective situation in which it falls short of, and fails to cover the same ground as, the objective situation. As we saw, the objective situation is always fuller than the subjective. There are always aspects of the objective situation about which the agent is not mistaken, but of which he is completely unaware. At any given time, for example, it may be the case, but at the same time I may never dream, that by sending money to a particular address in a distant town I may be able to meet a very severe human need. Moreover, it is clear that I cannot have a duty with respect to those aspects of the objective situation of which I am completely unaware. If, for example, I am completely ignorant of the circumstances in the distant town it is certainly not my duty to send money to some address there.

Yet this matter is more complicated than that, and in this way. The subjective situation consists, it will be agreed, of judgments made by the agent. Now these are of at least two different kinds, judgments which are merely descriptive of the situation, and judgments which indicate actions which the agent considers he can perform in this situation. No doubt there is a sense in which the situation consists of the former set of judgments, while the latter is not included in it but is based upon it. Yet in another sense the total practical situation involves both sets of judgments, and a distinction



## THE MORAL SITUATION

may be drawn within it between those judgments which deal with what are taken to be actual facts and those other judgments which deal with potential actions. For the sake of convenience we may be allowed to name the former the theoretical judgments and the latter the practical judgments.

Now, so far as the theoretical judgments are concerned, it is clear that if there is any part of the objective situation not covered by this part of the subjective situation an agent can have no duty with regard to such facts as fall within it. This indeed is the case of which an examination has already been given. The needy person in a distant town was not represented in the theoretical part of my subjective situation, and, as we saw, I was under no obligation to act with regard to such a person.

A similar conclusion is not so evident, however, when we pass from the theoretical part to the practical part of the subjective situation. By way of illustration we may take the Biblical instance of the man who fell among thieves and was left injured by the wayside. Upon anyone who knew nothing of this occurrence there was of course no duty to render assistance; and that is the case with which we have already dealt. But we are told that a Levite passed by, and we are to suppose that he did notice the injured man and was roughly aware of his condition. Consequently, the existence of the man's need was covered by the theoretical part of the subjective situation. From this point, however, the further description of the case may follow one or other of two different lines. On the one hand, it may be supposed that the Levite realized on seeing the man's condition that he himself might render assistance, and that indeed it was his duty to do so. If this were so we can only say that the Levite failed to do his duty. On the other hand (and this is the possibility which concerns us at the moment), it may have been the case that, although he was aware of the man's condition, the Levite did not dream for a moment that he might render assistance. It may never have occurred to him owing to a lack of interest, that is, *to a lack of motive*. Such a case is a practical possibility. It happens frequently that we are roughly aware of the facts, but it just does not strike us that we can do anything about them. The formal description of cases like that is that while the objective elements are covered by the theoretical side of the subjective situation, they do not enter into the practical side; and the question arises whether the facts must be covered by the practical, as well as by the theoretical, side of the subjective situation before they can give rise to an obligation. In terms of our illustration the question amounts to this, *If it just did not occur to the Levite that he might assist the injured man, did the Levite fail to do his duty?*

On examination it would seem that we cannot give a different

answer in this case from that which was given in the other case where the facts were not covered by the theoretical side of the subjective situation. If the Levite did not realize that he could render a service it seems hardly plausible to say that none the less he ought to have rendered it. Indeed we ordinarily draw a distinction between failure to do one's duty and not realizing that we might have done something else, as when we excuse a person on the ground that "he just did not think." Moreover, the actions which we realize we can do are selected by motives, and if in addition to these actions there are some that in some sense we might have done but did not think of doing, the explanation can only be that we had no motive to do them. But if we had no motive to do them then in another perfectly good sense we could *not* do them, for, on the level of specifically human conduct, we cannot do anything without a motive. If that is admitted it follows from the principle that "I ought" implies "I can" that the acts in question were not morally obligatory.

Now it is important to notice on what precise ground the Levite is thus excused. It is on the ground that it did not occur to him that he might render some assistance; and it is not on the ground that he did not raise the question of duty at all. For one thing, that would be no excuse. What exactly our duty is may depend on our view of the situation, but the fact of duty does not depend upon our recognition of it. In the second place, it is quite possible that in the given case the Levite did raise the question of duty. It may be that he would very much have preferred to remain at home that day, but that, having promised to attend a conference, he considered it his duty to be there, and he may in fact have been on his way thither when he passed the injured man. The excuse is that whether he raised the question of duty or not it did not strike him that he could if he cared render assistance to the man.

None the less it seems certain that, although, since it did not strike the Levite that he could assist the injured man, it cannot be held that he failed to do his duty in not assisting him, he did fail to do some duty. However he may be excused, we think that his insensitiveness is blameworthy. How then can the theory take account of this fact, if it is right in maintaining that it can never be a man's duty to perform an action which he did not realize he could perform? In answering this it is necessary to observe that the Levite's moral failure has reference, not to the objective situation as the agent sees it, that is, to the subjective situation in the sense in which we have all along been using the phrase, but to the subjective situation in a *different sense*, in a sense, namely, which has regard, not to the situation directly confronting the agent, but to the possible effects upon the agent's character of any action he takes with regard to the situation directly confronting him. Thus every situation has what may

## THE MORAL SITUATION

be called a secondary aspect, consisting of the possible effects on the agent's character of any action he may take; and it is here, apparently, that the Levite in the illustration failed. It may then be said that perhaps on the occasion in question and certainly on other occasions the man ought to have acted in such a way as to cultivate and strengthen the benevolent motives.

Here again, however, the matter is more complicated than is at first apparent; for it may be asked with regard to a duty in respect of the secondary aspect of situations how this duty is affected by the possibility of different opinions concerning this aspect. In other words, is it the case that in taking account of the secondary aspect of situations an agent ought to act with regard to that aspect *as he sees it*? Now when this question was dealt with in connection with the primary aspect of situations, that is, in connection with the situations directly confronting an agent, it was noted that he might be in error either in his moral thinking or in his non-moral thinking, and it was seen that in either case the agent's duty was a duty with reference to the subjective situation constituted by his thinking, whether that thinking was mistaken or not. In the present connection too, with reference to the secondary aspect of situations, the agent may be in error either in his moral thinking or in his non-moral thinking, and the question arises how the possibility of such error affects the agent's duty.

In the former case, the agent may entertain a somewhat false ideal of human character, but, given that he does really entertain it sincerely, it must be allowed that his duty is to act according to his lights. It cannot be his duty to act according to someone else's lights. Does a similar conclusion hold then with regard to the other main possibility of error, namely, in the agent's non-moral thinking, that is, in this connection, in his thinking about the state of his own character? Here, however, there is a difficulty, for it does not appear that there is in this case the same possibility of *genuine and sincere* error. The agent knows these facts from the inside as he could never know the facts of the objective world. No doubt if he could fall into genuine error in this department of the moral life his duties here also would be duties with regard to the subjective situation. But it is the possibility of the event of genuine error here that is itself in question. This of course is not to say that men always entertain true opinions about the facts of their own character. On the contrary, they very frequently have false opinions about this matter, but often, if not always, that is due, not to genuine and sincere error, but to wishful or wilful thinking, that is, to self-deception. Does then the characterization of erroneous thinking as wishful or wilful make any difference to the part this thinking plays in the moral life? Surely it does, for wilful thinking, thinking motivated by desire for some-

thing other than the truth, is thinking that is morally wrong. Consequently, so far as our mistaken thinking is wilful, it does not contribute to the subjective situation with respect to which our duties are duties. Moreover, clearly, this holds, not only in the case of the secondary aspect of the situation, which is our present subject, but also in the case of the primary aspect, with which we have already dealt. The subjective situation, that is to say, is the objective situation as the agent sees it, in so far as his seeing it thus is genuine and sincere, and not wilful.

We have now seen that a duty is a duty with regard to the subjective situation, that is, with regard to the objective situation as the agent sees it; but we have also seen that it is so only in so far as the agent's thinking about the objective situation is not wilful. Further, we have seen that this subjective situation has a secondary aspect which, it would seem, is *known* to the agent (apart from the intrusion of his wilful thinking), and is not therefore subjective, and which consists of the effects that any action will have upon the agent's character. These, however, are not two different situations with which at the same time the agent may be confronted, and in which he may have different duties. They are distinguishable aspects of the same situation, and although they may give rise to an apparent conflict of duties, this apparent conflict is in principle no different from apparent conflicts to which the primary aspect of the situation may by itself give rise.

Now in all this it is apparent that we have a duty in general to be careful and accurate in our apprehension of situations (both primary and secondary aspects), and to avoid wishful and wilful thinking. Indeed, careless thinking is just a special case of wilful thinking; and, as we have seen, wilful thinking does not contribute to the subjective situation with regard to which men have duties, but is itself morally wrong, that is, is a breach of duty. Two different accounts may be given, however, of this duty in general. It may, on the one hand, be taken as an additional duty, additional, that is to say, to our particular duties which vary from situation to situation; whereas on the other hand, it may be regarded as a *distinguishable* aspect of every duty. In the former case it may be argued that the duty in general is really a separate duty and does not occupy the same portion of time as the other particular duties. Thus, for example, I have a duty now, first of all, to apprehend my total situation accurately and without the intrusion of wilful thinking, and then, secondly, having done that or not as the case may be, I may have another duty to act in a particular way with regard to the total situation as I see it. If I fail to do the first duty that does not prevent my having, or my doing, a particular duty. This of course is inconsistent with what has already been said to the effect that wilful

## THE MORAL SITUATION

thinking does not contribute to the subjective situation; but it is a possible account of the matter, and something may be said in favour of it. Thus it may be argued that there is no difference in principle between this account and the account which is normally given of another kind of situation, namely, that in which, for example, a bank-clerk has made a private use of some of the bank's money. He failed to do his duty in making that use of the money; but having so failed, he is now confronted, we think, by a different situation to which his failure undoubtedly contributes, and in which it is now his duty to refund the money and perhaps also to take his punishment. Yet the two cases are not exactly parallel. For one thing, in the latter case the subsequent right action consists of undoing as much as possible the earlier wrong one, whereas in the other case it does not consist of any such thing. Indeed, to make the cases parallel in this respect, we should have to suppose that the bank-clerk, having appropriated the bank's money, began to argue thus with himself, "I have taken this money by a breach of duty, but whether rightly or wrongly it is now in my possession; I have to consider what right use to make of it, and I think that my duty is to give part at least to that needy family who live across the road." But, further, let us now suppose that the bank-clerk performs this action. Has he done what is right or not? The answer is that his action has some of the characteristics of a right action, that if circumstances were otherwise it might well be right, but that in fact as things are it is quite definitely wrong. If we did not know the earlier history of the bank-clerk we might well commend his generosity, and yet his action is undoubtedly wrong.

The moral is that moral situations in the lifetime of a single individual cannot be entirely isolated one from another. They are held together by the self-identity of a single agent, and his present situation is coloured by his history. Thus, it would appear, not only is the original parallel between the wifful thinker and the faithless banker inexact, but, also, we cannot isolate his wifful thinking from the situation which presents itself on the basis of it. His morally wrong thinking penetrates what we are apt to call the subsequent situation, and any action he does within it is vitiated from the beginning—unless indeed, like the bank-clerk in the original instance, he first seeks to undo the wrong that has been done. This means that every particular duty includes, or has as an aspect of it, the duty to look reality straight in the face and so avoid the distortion introduced by wifful thinking. It may also mean that every moral situation is, as a matter of fact, vitiated by immoral thinking.

# PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

## THE STATE OF PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES IN INDIA

P. T. RAJU, M.A. Ph.D.

CONTEMPORARY philosophical activity in India is influenced not only by India's traditional philosophy but also by Western Philosophy. One of the results of the introduction, by Macaulay, of the Western system of education into India is the popularization of the study of Western Philosophy, and Indians took to it quite enthusiastically. Sanscrit philosophical texts were at first regarded as sacred, and Europeans could have no access to them. But in time, the prejudice abated, and Sanscrit texts began to be translated into English. At the beginning, the motives behind Western interest in Indian Philosophy were mainly of two kinds: the rulers wanted to understand the culture and religions of the ruled in order to govern them without hurting their religious sentiments, and thus with the least friction; and secondly, Christian missionaries wanted converts and studied the religions and philosophies of the latter in order to find out defects in them and uphold the superiority of Christianity. But whatever be the motives and however biased the scholarship in the beginning, genuine academical interest in the philosophical literature of India came to be evinced, thanks to the work of men like Max Müller, Deussen, Rhys Davids, etc., and vast stores of Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina philosophical literature were unearthed not only in India but also outside. It should, however, be said that academical philosophers of the West did not take serious interest in Indian Philosophy as such; and not a single Indian philosophical concept has entered till now the discussions of Western technical philosophy. Schopenhauer was an exception: he made serious use of the concept of *Maya*. But later philosophers discarded it; and even when they mentioned it, they did so in a derogatory sense. So far as Western scholarship is concerned, Indian Philosophy still belongs to Indologists, orientalists, and Sanscritists: men disciplined in technical philosophy have not yet taken to it seriously.

Even in contemporary India, Indian Philosophy is unfortunately not a common subject in all the Indian universities. But it has been a compulsory subject in most of them for some decades. The attitude of reverence towards Sanscrit texts and their ideas was at first an obstacle to a rational understanding of them. It took time to render them into English and expound them rationally along with Western Philosophy. Western Philosophy, its exposition and its methods therefore became the exemplar, and supplied the conditions of rationality. Comparisons between Western and Indian systems as a result became inevitable. But the comparisons were made not from a vantage ground in order to survey both and define the peculiarities of each, but to present Indian Philosophy in the garb of the Western. It should, however, be added that the shortcomings of this comparison were not unnoticed. The rise and growth of national feeling, which was one of the important factors of the Indian Renaissance, deepened the interest of the educated Indians in their ancient philosophy and made them realize that Indian Philosophy was not merely Western Philosophy written in the sacred language of India, but had something unique to say.

The peculiar conditions under which interest in Indian Philosophy was roused and grew brought into being several types of philosophical activity.

as in understanding the growth of philosophical concepts; but they cannot determine the value of a philosophical system. Further, not only do some words get new meanings strangely unconnected with their original meanings, but also do the concepts, when they form a system, acquire new significance. And in many cases, philology, instead of being even a help, becomes a hindrance.

Fifthly, there are many who think that comparisons are indispensable. In fact, even to use Western philosophical terminology in the work of translation would be tacit comparison. To name a thing is to make a judgment; and to call an Indian concept by a Western name is to compare the two. And when comparison is tacit, as in this case, there is the chance of its being vague, slippery and misleading; but when it is explicit, there is a greater chance of its being corrected, if wrong. Hence, even to expound correctly and interpret Indian Philosophy, comparison is felt to be necessary. True, stray comparisons are often misleading; but the fact should not be an objection to comparison itself. The shortcomings of stray comparisons should make us realize that comparison should be systematic and should bring into bold relief the standpoints and motifs of the systems compared. Professor S. Radhakrishnan has so far done the most extensive and important work in the field of comparative philosophy, and has done most to popularize it. He is best known to the Western world for his penetrative insight into the living significance of the Western and Indian philosophical concepts has enabled him to interpret the latter in a most understandable and familiar way to Western readers and audiences and give a most rational and scientific clarification of the Indian concepts. But comparative philosophy, unlike comparative religion, is a difficult subject and requires sound knowledge of both Indian and Western philosophies. Hence, in spite of the enthusiasm shown for the subject, we do not find much systematic literature on it. As Western 'academical' philosophers have not taken adequate interest in Eastern philosophies as such, no great work on comparative philosophy has yet been published by them. Masson-Oursel's is the only good book written by a westerner worth mentioning in this connection. The author's *Thought and Reality: Hegelianism and Advaita* attempts a systematic treatment limited to the comparison of the two schools. There have been a number of stray articles written by Indians; but so far the work has not been co-ordinated on a large scale, which is greatly desirable.

In the sixth place, in order to avoid the difficulties involved in comparison, some start with a line of thinking adopted in Western Philosophy, and develop it so as to reach a result reached in Indian Philosophy. This development, the followers of this method present as their own thought, and thereby give no scope for the criticism that they are misinterpreting Indian or Western Philosophy. Of the followers of this method, Professor K. C. Bhattacharya is the best known. There are very few who follow this method exclusively. But it is a very useful method in that it encourages original thinking. Its defect is that it is prone to ignore even the logical context and background of the line of thought developed and, in the hands of the unwary, may result in confused thinking.

The seventh kind of activity is that of men like the late Dr. Hiralal Halder, the author of *Neo-Hegelianism*, who are proficient in Western Philosophy and do not claim acquaintance with Indian Philosophy.

Very often it is asked whether original and creative work is being done in India now. The question elicited varied answers and curious criticisms, because of the indefiniteness of the meaning of "original and creative work." There can be originality in the bare exposition of an ancient system of thought, in the application of an ancient philosophical idea to a new problem, in the

## PHILOSOPHY

systems in order to cover these fields is a new and necessary type of philosophical activity. It is desirable therefore that Indian Philosophy should progress. Otherwise, the name Indian Philosophy, like that of Greek Philosophy, would be restricted to the philosophy of a particular age, as if India and her philosophy belong to the past only. If what we call philosophy of contemporary India has also to be included, then Indian Philosophy will have to embrace much more than our ancient systems, concerned that they were only with the problem of ultimate Truth and liberation. Ancient thought might have been concerned with that problem alone; but there is no *a priori* reason that philosophy should be so restricted in scope and all thought concerned with other problems should not be included in Indian Philosophy. That it should be so included is not merely a question of terminology; it is life's necessity; for even the way to liberation has been made more intricate and involved by the increasing complexity of life. The foundations of even the ten commandments are no longer stable.

Besides, we should not overlook the existence of those Indians who either deny or do not care for ultimate Truth. And their speculations also should be included in Indian Philosophy, which would be India's philosophy, past, present and future, but not merely the ancient philosophy of India.

There is now appearing on the horizon another type of philosophical activity, which has already begun to attract a few Indian minds. There is a growing realization that the world is one, and that all philosophical traditions should be integrated without overlooking the significance of any. Nationalism and provincialism in philosophy should be abandoned. However imperfect and defective the beginnings, this activity is bound to have important and desirable results. A philosophy that is to be a philosophy of life should give due recognition to all phases of human existence. The different philosophical traditions of the world have stressed and treated as primary only certain phases. If man everywhere over the earth is to lead a balanced and whole life, the philosophy that is to guide him should take proper recognition of all the phases, and so incorporate all the truths stressed by the different philosophical traditions.<sup>1</sup>

But there seems to be a feeling in some Western thinkers that comparative philosophy is the business of the East and perhaps of India, and that it would contribute little of importance to philosophical activity in the West. This is to assume that the West has little to learn from the East, and that the East only has to learn from the West. This attitude, though not universal, is still the stronger. It is not for an oriental to defend the use of East for West. But it is on the face of it unbelievable that Eastern cultures and civilizations, which are thousands of years old, contain nothing useful for the West. "It is a reproach to us," says Dean Inge, "that with our unique opportunities of entering into sympathetic relations with Indian thought, we have made very few attempts to do so. I am not suggesting that we should become Buddhists or Hindus, but I believe that we have almost as much to learn from them as they from us." Even so hard-headed a realist as Lord Russell says: "Asia must come to the rescue of the world, by causing Western inventiveness to subserve human ends instead of the base cravings of suppression and cruelty.

<sup>1</sup> It is significant that the Government of India have sponsored the publication of *Philosophy: East and West* (with an Editorial Board consisting of Sir S. Radhakrishnan, the Chairman, Professor A. R. Wadia, Professor D. M. Datta, and Professor Humayun Kabir, the Secretary), which will include all important philosophies of the world. Another volume on comparative philosophy has been projected (with the Editorial Board consisting of Dean Inge, Principal L. P. Jacks, Professor E. A. Burtt, Professor M. Hiriyanna, and Dr. P. T. Rau), which will contain articles on the subject from philosophers of the different countries of the world, and will attempt to bring East and West philosophically together. The volume is to be presented, in honour of completing his sixtieth year, to Sir S. Radhakrishnan, who has done the largest and the most important work on comparative philosophy.



## PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

to which it has been prostituted by the dominant nations of the present day." The West has glorified activity for activity's sake, with the result that it has lost all sense of appreciation of peace. Its humanism, which has become scientific, has levelled down man to a biological and physical creature, and is ignoring his deep spiritual inwardness. Scientific humanism, without the sense of spiritual inwardness, becomes aimless; and spirituality, which forgets to recognize the value of humanism, becomes abstract and empty. It is therefore all the more desirable that the two philosophical traditions should be systematically integrated, keeping in clear view the needs of contemporary life. This kind of philosophical activity, which is forced by Providence upon India, the battle-ground of East and West for some generations, will be more fruitful if it is sponsored in the leading countries of the West also. And the attitude which Western philosophers should take to the Eastern should no longer be that of indifference or patronage, but that of eagerness to learn. It is worth raising the question whether Eastern philosophy, particularly the Indian and the Chinese, should not form part of the philosophy courses in the Western universities, just as Western Philosophy rightly forms the major part of the philosophy courses of the Eastern universities. Without such provision, it is difficult to expect Western academical philosophers to take the necessary interest in Eastern Philosophy. The practice of most of the Western universities has so far been to relegate Eastern Philosophy to orientalists, who are generally linguists and philologists, but needs to be changed from now onwards. Then only may the truth that humanity all the world over is one be rationally and usefully realized.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed presentation of contemporary philosophical activity in India, see the author's chapter "Indian Philosophy. A Survey" (*Progress of Indic Studies*, The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona) and the article, "Research in Indian Philosophy: A Review" (*Ganganatha Jha Research Institute Journal*, Vol. I, Parts 2, 3 and 4, Allahabad).

## CORRIGENDUM

In the review of *Clinical Psychology*, by Charles Berg, M.D. (July 1949), the phrase "and I am sure" (p. 277, line 2) should have been "and I am not sure."

## NEW BOOKS

*Mathematics in Aristotle*. By SIR THOMAS HEATH. (Clarendon Press: Geoffrey Cumberlege. 1949. Pp. xiv + 291. Price 21s.)

Sir Thomas Heath died in 1940. After his death, Lady Heath found the MS. of this work and took it to Sir David Ross, who read it through and reported that though a rough copy only, it was complete, and advised that a fair copy should be prepared. This was undertaken by Lady Heath and the present volume is the result. It is pleasant to read in Lady Heath's preface that their son, Geoffrey T. Heath, assisted in reading proofs, revising formulae, etc.

The book consists of short paragraphs of English translations (made by Heath himself during the later years of his life), grouped according to the Aristotelian work from which they have been taken, and each given an informative mathematical heading in English; very often the passage is followed by a passage of commentary by Heath, or notes on possible emendation of the text. The book has a detailed table of contents and comprehensive indexes.

The book opens up the whole text of Aristotle to mathematicians who have no Greek, and enables them to form a judgment of Aristotle both as a mathematician and as a mathematical philosopher. He was, as would be expected in an encyclopaedist of his grandeur, no narrow specialist, and the topics dealt with in these extracts cover the whole range of the then mathematical knowledge, both "pure" and "applied." As instances there may be mentioned elementary propositions in geometry (especially the sum of the angles of a triangle being two right angles) the incommensurability of the diagonal of a square, the definitions of points, lines and surfaces and the question of their divisibility, Zeno's and other paradoxes, circular and rectilinear motion, the number of dimensions of space, the difference between mathematics and physics, the elements of mechanics (these rather from Aristotle's school than from Aristotle himself), the infinite, the nature of definitions and axioms, the aesthetics of mathematics and the qualities needed in mathematical proof. On the whole it cannot be said that Aristotle is very profound on any of these subjects; he does not display the depth of Euclid, for example. Heath, in his preface to the *Everyman Euclid* of 1932 recommends Euclid as a bedside book, and the reviewer must state that on reading through this Euclid recently he was unexpectedly thrilled by the undeviating purposefulness of Euclid in never either allowing himself to be deflected or pausing to view the geometrical scenery, but always relentlessly pushing on with propositions that will later be keystones in the structure, however unattractive at the moment. The present work from Aristotle is equally a bedside book, but it is more akin to de Morgan's *Budget of Paradoxes* in the kind of pleasure it affords.

There is no doubt upon which side Aristotle would have been in the current controversy between those who uphold a utilitarian origin for science and those who attribute scientific advances to the spur of curiosity. The "master of them that know" would have been well to the West of the iron curtain. For example: "When all such arts had been established, those of the sciences which are directed neither to pleasure nor to the necessities of life were in turn discovered, and this happened first in those places where men enjoyed leisure. . . . It was owing to wondering that men began and still continue to philo-

sophize." On the other hand he would have been hostile to Kinematic Relativity, in spite of the fact that those who have developed it have been dubbed "modern Aristotelians," for he thought that the fact of motion made a barrier between mathematics and physics (pp. 12, 15, 65, 98), whereas the advance made in Kinematic Relativity is precisely the passage from static geometry to kinematics, dynamics and the flux of time. Of great interest are Aristotle's anticipations of Newton's First Law of Motion and the Law of Equality of Action and Reaction (pp. 115, 281-2) and the proof in the *Mechanics* of the parallelogram of velocities. If only Aristotle had not wobbled on the subject of motion under no force, mechanics might have started centuries before Galileo. Aristotle actually concluded that "in the void all bodies will have the same speed" (i.e. fall at the same speed) (p. 119), but treated this as a *reductio ad absurdum*. In spite of these gropings, he was a pretty long way from Newtonian mechanics (see p. 145). Again, on the side of pure mathematics, Aristotle had no conception of the convergence of a series of positive terms; e.g. (p. 153), "If I add continually to a limited magnitude, I shall at length exceed any assigned magnitude whatever." But this is only to say that Aristotle was typically Greek in having no conception of algebra or its future, or of Cartesian geometry. He actually says (p. 44). "You cannot prove a geometrical proposition by arithmetic." This was a pity; for Aristotle possessed the true inwardness of the nature of an arithmetical continuum, as when, in confutation of one of Zeno's paradoxes, he said: "Time is not made up of individual instants (nows) any more than any other magnitude is made up of indivisibles (points)" (p. 134).

Many of Aristotle's detailed comments on geometry quoted in this book, and Heath's further comments on them, are of considerable interest, though space does not suffice to give examples. But when he is merely engaged in philosophizing, Aristotle is, to the modern reader, somewhat tedious. The moral of this book, for any young mathematician bitten with a desire to start philosophizing on mathematics, can be summarized in an injunction attributed to Professor H. F. Baker: "You must be a craftsman first." E. A. MILNE

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*Four Views of Time in Ancient Philosophy.* By JOHN F. CALLAHAN. (Harvard University Press. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege. Pp ix + 209. Price 16s.)

The four views of time in ancient philosophy mentioned in the title are those of Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus and St. Augustine. The aphorisms under which they are summarized are: "Time, the Moving Image of Eternity" (Plato), "Time, the Number of Motion" (Aristotle); "Time, the Life of Soul" (Plotinus), and "Time, a Distention of Man's Soul" (St. Augustine). Some fifty pages are devoted to the exposition of each "view," and the whole book is tied together by a terse "conclusion," recapitulating and contrasting the four "views." There is also a short bibliography, and full references are given in footnotes.

Though there is no reference in the volume to modern scientific writers on time, and indeed only one fleeting reference to Kant, the aspect of the discussion which impinges most vividly on a non-classical, scientific reviewer is the extreme appositeness to modern time-theory of many of the ideas put forward, once the terms used have been translated into modern idiom. For example, "soul" as used by Plotinus is what we nowadays should call an observer using public, world-wide, cosmic time. "soul" for St. Augustine is the local observer, using his private time, Plato's and Aristotle's "uniform

circular motion of the heavens" needs of course to be read as "the rotation of the earth"; and Aristotle's "number" means for him not "real number" but "integer" or "rational fraction."

The differing attitudes of the four thinkers are characterized by the author as metaphorical (Plato's), physical (Aristotle's), metaphysical (Plotinus'), and psychological (St. Augustine's). It is interesting that we continually come across statements of ideas which have found precise mathematical expression in modern kinematic relativity. Thus Callahan remarks that for Plato (in the *Timaeus*), "the material universe has no environment because there is nothing else" (p. 10); again, for Plato, "Time was created along with the universe" (p. 17). These are in agreement with the modern view of the existence of a natural origin of time ( $t = 0$ ), before which time was not, and with the existence of an inaccessible outer boundary to the universe in Euclidean space. On the other hand, according to Callahan, for Aristotle there is a distinction between the time of mathematics and the time of physics, between "the realities of mathematical science that are abstracted from all motion, and those of nature that have in themselves as a distinctive feature a principle of motion" (pp. 59-60), whereas the most modern view is that there is essentially no distinction between geometry and physics—between the "theorems" of the one and the "laws of nature" of the other. Again, the difficulties encountered by Aristotle in correlating instants with points on a line, in collating the moving "now" with the notion of prior and posterior, and in distinguishing between an enumerable plurality and a measurable magnitude (pp. 50, 51) are all cleared up in the modern theory of real numbers and the arithmetical continuum. And though, as Aristotle insisted, circular motion in the form of the rotation of the earth continues to be our chief practical measure of time, his reason for this—that circular motion is the primary kind of motion (p. 83)—is typically Aristotelian in the bad sense, and in direct conflict with Newtonian mechanics.

Contrasted with Aristotle's strictly physical analysis of time is Plotinus' hypostasis of time; if we translate both Plotinus and Callahan into modern terminology, Plotinus' view is that we must first choose a phenomenon (rotation of the earth, vibration of a pendulum, recession of the nebulae) and let that be the measure of "uniform time" by definition, acquiescing in the resulting difficulty that in different contexts we may be using different "uniform times" (as in kinematic relativity). But Plotinus is not satisfied even when he has found a method of measuring time, for he wants in addition to know what time is (p. 111). He is indeed a metaphysically-minded Mrs. Camp, with Time as Mrs. Harris, and the modern answer to his question is Mrs. Camp's ultimate admission, "There ain't no sich pusson." Still, there is an acceptable modern ring about Plotinus' contention that "the temporal prior and posterior is more fundamental than the spatial" (p. 113), in opposition to Plato's view that there was space and becoming even before the creation of the universe, i.e. "before" time (p. 30). For Plotinus, as for Plato, time came into existence along with the universe (p. 121).

For St. Augustine, the before-and-after relation in the mind of the individual observer (or "soul," as he would say) is more fundamental (p. 171) than the temporal relations implicit for Aristotle in the rotation of the earth. For St. Augustine, present attention is the nexus between the observer's anticipations of the future and memories of the past (p. 179)—a phrase which reminds one of Whitehead. Again, for St. Augustine, God does not exist in a temporal priority to the universe (p. 182), for God exists in eternity, which we may not think of in a temporal way. For St. Augustine the "soul" is midway between God and the universe (p. 185); in modern, less ambitious terms, we may say that time is the intermediary between man's mind and motion. St. Augustine

total background of the mythical world will miss their essence just as isolating a sequence of musical notes from its context will hardly help to appreciate its musical significance. Endeavouring to establish formal types of mythical thinking will be of as little avail for an understanding of mythology as a "Formenlehre" of poetry and music would assist the appreciation of poetical and musical compositions. We have to go back to mythology as "stuff" if we want to grasp its character.

If we interpret Kerényi correctly, his rejection of the formalistic approach to mythology goes much beyond the sphere of interpretative effort; it has important philosophical implications. Cassirer, e.g., does not wish to enquire into the subject-matter of mythology—that "dark illimitable ocean" (Milton)—and is content to establish its homogeneity by formalistic principles such as constitute the myth-making function. Kerényi, on the other hand, tends to make the mythical world almost independent of any functional activity. To him, the realm of the mythical is experienced rather than created. Like the tonal world, it has a reality and objectivity of its own. The tonal world as much as the mythical wait, so to speak, to be given voice and shape in the particular creations of the musical composer and mythical poet respectively. This relative independence and objectivity of the material is particularly obvious in the instances of folk song and anonymous saga. Kerényi sees in them the primordial stuff from which the individual creations of music and mythology are made.

Kerényi's view that artistic creation in the realms of myth and music merely helps the material to reveal its own intrinsic character reminds one of Samuel Alexander's theory of art according to which "the work of art . . . however much it owes its form to the artist, reveals to him his own meaning, and the artistic experience is not so much invention as discovery. . . . In Michelangelo's unfinished statues of slaves in the Academy at Florence we can feel the artist not so much making the figure as chipping off flakes of the marble from the figure which is concealed in it, and which he is laying bare." Had Michelangelo not said himself "that there is no thought which the sculptor expresses in marble that does not exist there already"? Thus, "the artist's creativeness conceals from us his real passivity" (*Phil. and Hist. Pieces*, pp. 228 ff.). Kerényi would agree with this descriptive analysis of the artistic act, which in the case of Alexander has a purely phenomenological meaning; but he would give it a psychological and even metaphysical interpretation. In Jung's term, it is the "collective unconscious" and, ultimately, the absolute ground of the world which manifest themselves in the creations of myth. Kerényi's own way of expression suggests a kind of mystical introspection by which we reach the psychic kernel of our existence, the point where the Absolute protrudes, so to speak, into our very being. Thus, in withdrawing into ourselves we open ourselves to the world. *Vice versa*, to be open to the world means to become conscious of the ground of our own being. We move here no longer in the sphere of myth but of mysticism. It is difficult to give an account of Kerényi's excursions into metaphysical speculation as to the ultimate *raison d'être* of primary mythical symbols like the Mandala figure which, according to Jung, is an irreducible element in the psychic structure of man. Frobenius termed such ultimate data "monads", and recognized in them the structural patterns which underlie and differentiate the various systems of civilization. In employing this concept, Kerényi sees the emergence of works of myth and art, etc., in three stages: (1) the pre-monic, primordial stage of inexpressible awareness of the Divine; (2) the monadic stage at which the world impresses the psyche, and causes monadic images, archetypal patterns to be formed. It is these images and patterns

is an allegory of the former two. "Allegory" means that the one can be said in place of the other; but this is possible only because in the mythical world-view the world as a whole contains the mysteries of origin, birth and childhood. The world itself, mythically conceived, speaks in the language of symbolism. To call myths allegories of nature would be tantamount to denying the symbolic character of nature itself.

There is obviously a great deal of Romanticism alive in Kerényi's attitude to mythology. Like Hölderlin and the Romantics, he approaches the Greek myths in particular with a sense of religious reverence. Myth becomes an expression of genuine religion. He acknowledges indebtedness for this view to writers such as Thomas Mann, D. H. Lawrence and J. C. Powys, but is above all, following in the footsteps of Walter F. Otto, whose *Die Götter Griechenlands* (Bonn, 1929) made him first realize the religious significance of Greek mythology. Kerényi suggests that the individual mythical themes express the various aspects of the world in which we live. Myth is, so to speak, the world seen *sub specie divinitatis*. He agrees with K. P. Moritz, the friend of Goethe, who declared that "each divine figure in mythology comprehends as it were the essence of things viewed from some exalted standpoint." Each god, i.e. the idea which he expresses, is capable of making some aspect of reality translucent, meaningful, divine. In his monographs on *Hermes* (1944), *The Birth of Helena* (1945), *Prometheus* (1946), *The Goddess Nature* (1947), and numerous studies of a similar character, Kerényi has furnished fascinating interpretations of these mythical figures. The present reviewer is not competent to pass judgment on Kerényi's achievements as a classical scholar, but is impressed with his "existential" approach to the classical documents which seem to spring to life under his sympathetic and congenial treatment. It certainly succeeds in what Kerényi considers to be the primary object of the interpretation of mythology; to allow the myths to speak for themselves.

Kerényi's effort to re-interpret mythology, especially in its classical form, is guided by considerations transcending the field of the classical philologist. It arises out of his conviction that an appreciation of the mythical world will help Western man to regain his lost sense of religious values. Myth, which makes no demands of a dogmatic nature but flows naturally from the innate sources of the psychic experience, may teach man again to view the world *sub specie divinitatis*. Kerényi defines the meaning of *religio* as sensitiveness to the complex nature of things, readiness to accept reality in all its aspects, festive contemplation. This definition of religion points in the same direction as his interpretation of myth. It is the humanist in Kerényi who dominates the scholar. All his extensive, and indeed very intensive, writings have the advocacy of a new Humanism for their underlying theme. His Correspondence with Thomas Mann is perhaps the best introduction to his general outlook. In it, Thomas Mann hails the co-operation between Kerényi and Jung, between the mythologist and the psychologist as indicative of the Humanism of the Future. He considers it important that the interpretation of myth be guided by psychological experts in order to prevent its exploitation by irresponsible political charlatans (this was written in 1941) and enable it to function as a humanizing, not de-humanizing agency.

Kerényi's plea for a new Humanism based on the appreciation of mythology raises important and difficult issues. The romantic interpretation of Greek mythology is bound to clash with the religious attitude of the Jewish and Christian traditions. Hegel's dialectical method avoided this clash by subordinating paganism (and Judaism, for that matter) to Christianity. He considered himself in all sincerity as a Christian. In an analogous manner,

1. *The Divine Relativity: A Social Conception of God.* By CHARLES HARTSHORNE.  
(New Haven: Yale University Press; London: Cumberlege. Pp. xvii + 164. Price 15s.)

The peculiar interest of this book consists in its combination of warm religious concern with the minute analysis that characterizes the student of modern Logic. The author was one of the editors of the works of C. S. Peirce. He has given us an essay in what at one point he calls "pure theology," examining the idea of God by logical criteria, and leaving the existence of God unconsidered (though confessedly believing it). It is not an emotionally detached essay, but a sustained polemic, an attack, in the interest both of clear thinking and of religion, on the idea of God as absolute. Such an idea he finds both logically and religiously horrible. He believes that in freeing it from the traditional contradictions he is not reducing but enhancing its religious value.

That God is spoken of in general as absolute, or at least is given such absolute attributes as omnipotence, springs in part from piety. The theoretical difficulties which such extreme tributes raise are commonplaces of Theology; but Professor Hartsborne will not be alone in holding that those difficulties are often evaded. He thinks that the evasion is typical, a statement which seems to me to go too far, unless he has in mind only popular theology, or the rudimentary theology which is all that seminaries have time to teach and all that many of the students are able to bear. Anyhow, his insistence on clarity of conception, and the results to which that insistence leads him, should be extremely useful to those who muddle through their theology or philosophy of religion with an uncritical respect for the traditional forms of statement; and also to those who, with an uncritical contempt, suppose that when those forms have been shown to be faulty, everything that lies behind them has been disproved.

If "absolute" means "out of relation to anything," it is obviously applicable only to the Whole. If God is to be distinguished from other individuals—and without such a distinction it is hard to see how any religion can be grounded—He must be regarded, the author contends, as supremely relative, since He is related to everything and everyone, and, moreover, related to all these far more knowingly and sensitively than we are to Him or to anything else. He responds to everything, and responds to everything's response to Him—than which there could be nothing so relative. The point which Professor Hartsborne recurrently stresses is that what God is relative to is the actual, which is contingent, so that He is relative in the sense that is contrasted with "necessary." It is this ubiquitous relativity, combined with an affirmation (nowhere argued, as being outside the province of purely logical examination) that every creature has the power of mental response, that explains the sub-title of the book—"A social conception of God." Here the influence of Whitehead's "prehensions" is evident.

The controversy raised by the idealists about whether relations are internal or external is remembered and considered; for if all relations are internal, the only reality is an Absolute. Bradley's contention that all relations are internal to (constitutive of) their terms lost its sting when he concluded that the very notion of relation is self-contradictory. Professor Hartsborne can find no reason for passing from the admission that some relations must spring from the nature of some terms to the denial of what seems to be a fact, namely, that relations can be external to some terms. He would say, for example, with the realists, that knowing is intrinsically related to what is known, but not *vice versa*. It follows that God, so far as knower, is actually dependent on us,

our contingent decisions and doings determining His experience. The old view that the metaphysical dignity of God requires us to regard Him as impassive is thus shown to contradict the very notion of mind, which is essentially relative.

Hence the name which Professor Hartshorne gives to his theory—"sur-relativism." This is an unfortunate coinage, the prefix being neither English nor Latin, and not naturally meaning what is intended, namely, "supremely." It is a part of his theory, however, that God has an absolute aspect: for example, although His knowing of the contingent so far relativizes Him, the infallibility of His knowledge, and His knowledge of all possibilities, so far frees Him from relativity. But he emphatically denies that the unique excellence of God lies in His absolute aspect, which is an abstract aspect only. The qualities in Him that make religion possible are the supremely relative ones—His superlative sensitivity, knowledge, goodness and power.

The general line of thought is stimulating, and deserves to be pondered. I have confined myself to that because there are two matters on which I remain puzzled. The first is the author's conclusion to panentheism. I have not been able to see the logic of his inference that because God's knowledge of all His objects is uniquely adequate, these objects are related to Him internally, and in this sense are included in Him. The second and more basic difficulty is that I cannot find how he determines the idea of God which he is subjecting to logical analysis. He says that God is the one individual who can be conceived in purely categorical terms. What he regards as categories, and why, are not stated, but at point after point he seems to me to import elements that are supplied only by religious experience. Is there such an object as *the* idea of God, there to be analysed in a purely logical way? So far as I can see, the content of the idea of God is for philosophy bound up with the arguments by means of which we establish God's existence.

T. E. JESSOP.

*Man For Himself: an Enquiry into the Psychology of Ethics.* By ERICH FROMM.  
(Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1949 Pp xi + 254. Price 12s. 6d.)

The author of this book is an American psychologist whose main object, as I understand it, is to show that an analysis of human character, based on psycho-analytic research, compels us to reject ethical relativism and opt for "normative principles which are objectively valid." And this point of view, it is claimed, runs counter to the prevailing trend in modern psychology which emphasizes "adjustment rather than goodness."

Moral philosophers, I believe, are generally sceptical of the ability of psychologists to do their work for them, and would claim that analysing the good is an altogether different matter from analysing the springs of human conduct. Nevertheless, Mr. Fromm does succeed in showing how the findings of psycho-analysis not only refute the cruder theories of hedonistic utilitarians (theories, incidentally, to which few moral philosophers subscribe nowadays), but also increase our understanding of a number of moral problems involved in any ethic, utilitarian or intuitionist, which does not invoke a supernatural sanction. Chapter IV, for instance, contains a valuable psychological analysis of the differences between selfishness, self-love and self-interest, and an extremely relevant discussion of "authoritarian" as opposed to "humanistic" conscience. The former is "the voice of an internalized external authority whom we are eager to please and afraid of displeasing"; the latter is "our own voice, present in every human being and independent of external sanctions and rewards." And although everybody possesses both "consciences" (if in



different proportions), humanistic conscience, our author holds, "represents not only the expression of our true selves; it contains also the essence of our moral experiences in life." The importance of all this for the ethical validity of the "moral law within" is obvious enough; but, unfortunately, Mr. Fromm spoils a good case in his attempt to list the objects with which each conscience is respectively concerned. Duty and self-sacrifice, for instance, which he relates to authoritarian conscience, can equally well spring from humanistic conscience; not only do we know this to be a fact but Mr. Fromm himself stated it, by implication, in his own definition of humanistic conscience.

Apart from inconsistencies of this nature, Mr. Fromm's book has a somewhat uneven tenor—partly, I think, because he is uncertain how far to trust the intelligence of his readers. Thus, while he does not hesitate at times to use technical terminology, he always feels compelled to translate even the simplest Latin phrases (e.g. *omne animal triste post coitum*); and in his chapter on "Human Nature and Character" profound insight is frequently jostled by superficial observation. But despite these defects, *Man for Himself* may profitably be studied by those anxious to learn something valuable about the "art of living" (it is for such people that the book is primarily intended); and it is not without interest to more speculative minds concerned with the problems of moral philosophy.

J. HARTLAND-SWANN.

*Dante the Philosopher.* By ÉTIENNE GILSON. Translated by David Moore. (London: Sheed and Ward, 1948. Pp. xii + 338. Price 15s. net.)

We have here a translation of the distinguished author's *Dante et la philosophie*, published at Paris in 1939, in the series of *Études de philosophie médiévale*, No. xxxviii. If Professor Gilson disclaims, as he does, the right to call himself a Dantologist, how far less can one presume to claim it whose knowledge and understanding of Dante is to his as the merest smattering? All the present reviewer can pretend to do is to tell the readers of *PHILOSOPHY* something of what they will find in this masterly book. The translation is well done; it reads like an English work; on the other hand, the renderings of Latin quotations do not suggest familiarity with that language and may give in several instances a misleading impression to those unable to construe the original for themselves.

Much of the book is concerned with two problems: that of the historical reality of Beatrice, and that of the motives which led Dante to give to the Averroist philosopher Siger of Brabant a high place among the doctors in Paradise. The former of these is a question which cannot but affect one's whole view of the poet. M. Gilson's treatment of it takes the form of a brilliant and often very amusing criticism of the theory advanced by the learned Father Mandonnet in his *Dante le Théologien* that Beatrice is a purely symbolic figure and that the unfaithfulness to her with which she tasks Dante in the *Purgatorio* refers to the poet's abandonment of a clerical vocation in which Fr. Mandonnet supposes him to have persisted up to the threshold of the subdiaconate, which, had he received it, would have conferred upon him the "indelible character" of holy orders with its obligation to perpetual celibacy. The groundlessness of this theory is convincingly exposed by M. Gilson, and the inconsistencies and absurdities into which it has betrayed its advocate subjected to a fire of delightful satire, all the more effective for the unflinching respectfulness of its tone towards the eminent scholar who is its object. Different as it is in many respects, Fr. Mandonnet's thesis inevitably reminds an English reader of the denial by the so-called Baconians of Shakespeare's

authorship of the plays which bear his name; for the two delusions (they are surely such) have this in common that both have their source in a radical failure to approach sympathetically the self-revelation of one who, vast and comprehensive as is the range of his genius, is after all primarily a great artist. But in his successful defence of the real existence of the lady whom Dante loved M. Gilson is careful to warn us—and the warning is of great importance—that we must not be led astray into forgetting that what is relevant to our understanding the poet is not the actual history, as we may attempt to ascertain it from other sources, of Beatrice Portinari, but the shape which she has taken in the imagination and thought of her immortal lover. In his study of Dante's relation to Beatrice, M. Gilson is led to a most interesting examination of the part played in the spiritual experience of certain masters (he takes Petrarch and Wagner as examples) of what he calls a "Muse"; a woman, that is, the artist's love for whom seems to have been necessary to liberate the full play of his genius, although—or rather—on condition of being inhibited, for one reason or another, from fulfilment in the permanent intimacy of marriage. The first of several *Eclaircissements* included in an appendix to the work before us, is devoted by M. Gilson to this topic; and no part of the book is more valuable as a contribution to literary criticism.

The other problem to which M. Gilson directs special attention is that of the appearance of the Averroist Siger in the *Paradiso* as the subject of a panegyric pronounced by St. Thomas Aquinas, the great opponent of Averroism. This, in contrast with that of the reality of Beatrice, is an isolated problem, but one which has never found a satisfactory solution; nor does M. Gilson claim that his own disposes of all the difficulties which it involves. He dismisses (without denying the possibility that the belief on which it rests may be correct) the theory—propounded on the strength of a treatise recently discovered, which has been attributed to Siger because included in a manuscript containing a work already held to be his and others of a similar tendency—that the Brabantine master before his death abandoned his Averroism and became a follower of St. Thomas. Nor does he adopt the unlikely hypothesis of Fr. Mandonnet, to whose researches we are indebted for most of our knowledge of Siger's opinions, that Dante was unacquainted with what he had really taught. He holds that Dante chose Siger for the place assigned to him in *Paradiso* as a representative of pure philosophy unassisted by divine revelation; the existence of such a philosophy being in the poet's view not inconsistent with, but required by such a theology as that of which St. Thomas is the representative. In the same way he makes St. Bonaventure glorify Joachim of Fiore, whom he had on earth opposed and whose prophetic gift St. Thomas had expressly denied, in order to indicate that the detachment of the Church from the temporal power (which Dante was profoundly convinced that God had entrusted not to the Church, but to the Empire) might rightly be carried further, as it was by Joachim, than either St. Bonaventure or St. Thomas had contemplated; and this the Seraphic and Angelic Doctors must be conceived to have come in heaven to recognize.

The examination of the two problems with which we have been concerned, falls into its place in the main subject of the book as elucidating Dante's general theory of human life. M. Gilson has no doubt that Dante is not, as some have thought, a wholehearted disciple of St. Thomas, much as he unquestionably owes to him and greatly as he admired and often delighted to follow him. It is indeed obvious that his conception of the Empire, to the setting forth of which his *De Monarchia* is devoted and which again and again finds expression in the *Divine Comedy*, is not derived from St. Thomas, who nowhere treats (any more than in the preceding century did John of

Salisbury) the Holy Roman Emperor as in a position essentially different from that of any other independent Christian sovereign; and who attributes a universal jurisdiction, immediately derived from God, not to any secular authority, but only to the Church and its head, the Pope. Dante, on the other hand, insists on the autonomy of the Roman Emperor, the only genuine "Monarch," who receives his authority directly from God, and not through the Pope or the Church; having indeed received it from God before the foundation by Christ of the Catholic Church under the successor of Peter as his vicar. To the Pope the Emperor owes indeed filial reverence, but not political obedience; while with the autonomy of the Empire goes that of human reason or philosophy (represented by Aristotle, whose authority like the Emperor's dates from before the Incarnation) in relation to the Christian revelation, of which the Church is the witness and the guardian.

Dante, though not a thoroughgoing Thomist, is indeed not, so M. Gilson shows, by any means, as some have supposed, a heretic. For him philosophy and the Empire, though independent of theology and the Church, are not independent of God, the only Source of all authority, whether in thought or politics. He follows St. Thomas in so distinguishing a sphere wherein we are wholly dependent upon revelation for our knowledge from one wherein natural reason leads us to truth, that the latter is allowed, within its proper limits, a free play, untrammelled by dogma; but he goes further than St. Thomas in recognizing as ordained for man, two beatitudes, one attainable in this life, to which reason, especially as embodied in the philosophy of Aristotle, is our appointed guide, and another, (the only one acknowledged by St. Thomas) reserved for another life, the beatific vision of God.

On p. 234 for *ingego* read *ingegno*; on p. 291 for "analogical" "anagogical." On p. 204, n. 1 *A History of Political Theory in the West* should not be quoted as R. W. Carlyle, but as R. W. and A. J. Carlyle. Though both names appear on the title page, for the authorship of most of the work and the final form of the whole A. J. C. was alone responsible.

C. C. J. WEBB.

*Essays in Philosophy and Other Pieces.* By A. D. Ritchie. (Longmans, Green and Co., London, New York, Toronto. 1948. Pp. 208. Price 12s. 6d.)

This book consists of a collection of essays and articles, written between 1927 and 1946 and, for the most part, previously published in such periodicals as the *Monist*, the *Hibbert Journal*, *Mind*, *Philosophy* and the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*. They fall roughly into four groups: first, discussions at a popular level of such topics as freedom, pacifism, irrationalism in politics, miracles, immortality and the existence of God (the last a "pseudo-Socratic dialogue"); second, a group of four professedly more technical papers, on logical positivism, Aristotle's logic and Lord Russell's, Collingwood's theory of "absolute presuppositions," and the Atomic Theory "as Metaphysics and as Science"; third, two summary accounts of the scientific and metaphysical achievements of, respectively, Newton and Samuel Alexander; finally, two sentimental-nostalgic sketches of settlements on, or off, the coast of New Brunswick.

The author himself seems doubtful of the desirability of republishing these pieces. Understandably, for though one or two of the articles have merit and the collection as a whole might be recommended as an intellectual sedative, it is difficult to see what other good purpose is served by it. Professor Ritchie's essays are not remarkable for originality of thought, rigour of argument, or felicity of expression. Nor does any particular unity of theme or method

## NEW BOOKS

emerge from their presentation in a single volume. One social generalization of interest is suggested by a distinction, recurring faintly in two or three essays, between three kinds of attitude: the genuinely scientific, the genuinely religious and the crudely "magical" or irrational. It is clear that the author regards the first two as somehow complementary, and thinks that their inadequate development leaves a gap in the lives of communities (if not of all individuals) which is dangerously filled by the third. But he is scarcely more precise than this. The sense which the key words bear remains obscure.

It is fair to add that Professor Ritchie is capable of departing, in both directions, from the general level of intellectual and literary mediocrity. The complacent joviality of his Socrates, on the one hand, is infuriating. His note on Russell and Aristotle, however, though the points he makes are not unfamiliar, is clearly and economically written. The best things in the book are his factual reports on the history of scientific discovery and the methods of scientific and technical workers. His sketch of Newton's work contains nothing new, but is lucid and informative. His essay on the Atomic Theory has some interesting suggestions on the interaction between metaphysics and science. A metaphysical theory about, say, the structure of matter may be a kind of model which "satisfies the imagination" (*Leibniz*), but has no empirically verifiable consequences. The transition from the imaginatively satisfying, to the working (i.e. testable), model is the transition from metaphysical theory to scientific hypothesis; and is illustrated, says Ritchie, in the case of the Atomic Theory. Between Lucretius and Dalton there is a connection. Their theories, of course, are not at all the same, but the imaginative model psychologically prepares the way for the testable hypothesis.

Even in the case of this one, positively illuminating, essay, however, confidence is badly shaken by such a sentence as the following (p. 101):

It has been known for a long time from statistical studies that the properties of an aggregate of a very large number of units are not identical with those of the units; e.g. the population of a town has a birth rate and death rate, but not the individuals who are born and die.

One wonders what statistical knowledge is needed for this discovery. The phrasing seems to suggest that Professor Ritchie regards it as an empirical matter, a question of fact. So also does the reference in the previous sentence to what is evidently regarded as a parallel discovery, namely that "the mechanical properties of small things differ from large ones" (*sic*); e.g. some small animals run fast on thin legs, some large animals walk slowly on thick ones. This is the sort of carelessness in writing which breeds confusions in logic

P. F. STRAWSON.

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*The Naturalism of Samuel Alexander* By J. W. MCCARTHY. (King's Crown Press, Columbia University, N.Y. Pp. 111. Price \$2.50. And Oxford University Press Price 14s.)

To open a book with this title is to hope for some clarification of Alexander's cryptic utterances, some justification of his presuppositions, some clue to his "method of analogy" and his conception of value, some squaring of his apparently circular argumentation. This hope rises to expectation when, on the second page, we read that "he has presented us with a coherent, comprehensive and meaningful position." But on the next page we read that "he has failed to make explicit certain unifying concepts which are latent in the structure of his thought," among which are noted his "naturalism" and his use of analogy. And at the end of the book similar charges are brought against

his identification of Time with "Nisus" and his account of its relation to Space and Matter, and also against his assertion that Deity (the stage of evolution subsequent to man), will be "more perfect than man," though goodness has been defined as that which "prevails" at any stage, and as merely one of "our precious human values."

But if all these exceptions are made, what remains of "coherence," "comprehension" or "meaning" in Alexander's system? The optimistic presupposition would be groundless, the analogies (mind : matter : time : space, God : man :: colour : extension) would be fantastic, and the whole argument about values would be circular.

A "higher" stage of evolution (e.g. mind) is for Alexander merely a stage which presupposes and depends upon an earlier (e.g. matter), *therefore* called lower, but which is not presupposed by or dependent upon it. Yet he constantly uses the word "higher" with the implication which we commonly give to the word "better," and sometimes actually substitutes the phrase "more perfect." And on this implication the author throws no light; indeed some of his attempts to do so seem to add obscurity: "Goodness is not a description of an absolute, but it is the process by which goodness is arrived at if it is ever attained. So also in the case of beauty, it is the process by which agreement is reached, if it ever is reached, by which those who are in a position to know arrive at an agreement as to what constitutes beauty" (p. 35).

The chapter-headings are: Some Basic Notions; Art, Beauty and Aesthetics; Goodness; Truth; The Tertiary Qualities; Value; Religion. There is a bibliography.

E. F. CARRITT.

*The Dark Knowledge of God.* By CHARLES JOURNET. Translated from the French by James F. Anderson. (Sheed and Ward, 1948. Pp. 122. 7s. 6d.)

This short Thomist essay is intended to define the relation between natural theology and the "redemptive knowledge" of faith on the one hand, and "mystical and experimental knowledge" of God on the other. Natural and revealed theology, in their various ways, both employ concepts in their endeavour to illuminate their object—concepts, however, which at best are but stammering attempts to express the ineffable. The divine names are "inundated" by the divine reality. For not only are most of the perfections attributed to God "mixed," i.e. metaphorical in application, but even those "absolute" perfections which are said of Him properly ("God is truly our Creator, our Lord, our Father . . . truly infinite existence, infinite purity, infinite goodness") are incapable of expressing their compenetration with other names, the fulness of God's simplicity.

This conceptual knowledge, the "knowledge that knows not" is compared with the "transconceptual silence" of mystical union, the "nescience that knows." But whilst this obscure, affective apprehension of Divinity is beyond conceptual affirmation or negation, it is nevertheless rooted in the concepts of discursive theology. Without such foundations, mysticism would be at the mercy of illusion. It is not that the mystic can dispense with the ordinary processes of human reason, but "love causes faith to go further than concepts do" and his is a uniquely complete instance of the law of love which "tends to things as they are in themselves." But of course this final fulfilment of mystical union is an "infused" contemplation, and is possible only in virtue of a special grace whereby (in St. John of the Cross' words) "God without the sound of words . . . teaches the soul—and the soul knows not how—in a most secret and hidden way."

## NEW BOOKS

The dimensions of the book are too slight to allow Father Journet more than a very summary exposition; one would especially have welcomed a more thorough discussion of mystical theology itself. As it stands, the book is a useful introduction to the subject in its wider setting. From that point of view however, as well as on general grounds, it seems a pity that Father Journet should have relegated such a substantial proportion of his material to footnotes accumulated at the end of chapters. This habit (to which, for some reason, modern Thomists seem to be specially prone), adds quite unnecessarily to the difficulty of reading and may even threaten the unity of such books.

WALTER STEIN.

*The Philosopher's Way.* By JEAN WAHL. (Oxford University Press. New York 1948. Pp. xiv + 334. Price unstated).

Some years before the last war Professor Jean Wahl wrote an interesting discussion of the philosophies of William James, Bradley, Alexander, Whitehead and Heidegger in a book called *Vers le Concret*. The study could have been taken as a comment on Whitehead's saying that the task of philosophy is to describe not abstractions but concreteness. Different abstract theories may bring out different facets of the real world, but philosophy should try to set them against one another in such a way as to bring us to a richer and more integral experience of the real world. Professor Wahl's book seemed to give promise of an interesting approach, and I opened this new book with the hope that he would develop it further. (In the intervening years Professor Wahl has been imprisoned and held in a concentration camp by the Germans, escaped to the U.S.A. where this book was written, and has now returned to Paris.) I must confess, however, that I have found the book tantalizingly difficult to read. Professor Wahl's method is to devote a short chapter to most of the main problems of philosophy (e.g. Substance, Quantity and Quality, Causality, the Infinite, etc.), and in each he recapitulates the views of the philosophers of the past. His aim, he tells us, is to show that we are now at a critical and revolutionary stage in the history of thought in which these problems are being seen in a new form. But the method of trying to tell the story each time if not from the Creation, at any rate from Thales and Parmenides means that what Professor Wahl thinks this revolution is tends to become lost in the recapitulation of a catalogue of views. I cannot help thinking that this way of giving extremely short summaries of the history of thought on every problem mentioned makes unsatisfactory reading to the philosophically educated and to the common reader alike. The latter is likely to get the impression that philosophy is a ding-dong business in which somebody makes a suggestion only to be countered by an opposite one from someone else, while the philosophically minded are not interested in summaries of conclusions, but in following the trains of thought by which they were reached. (We know how we have to fight against the tendency in some of our students to answer examination questions on the history of philosophy as if it were a summary of conclusions, without appreciating the thinking which led to them.)

That Professor Wahl has chosen this method is to be regretted because I believe if he would only develop and argue his own views independently, he has something to say. He is an "Existentialist" who has not fallen for the extreme irrationalism of some of that persuasion, nor for the esoteric obscurities of those who try, like Heidegger, to write some kind of ontology of "Not Being"—making some of us sympathize with the curses which the ancient Parmenides might have called down on their heads. Professor Wahl's own

approach is nearer to Bradley's (on one side of Bradley). He is trying to formulate an empirical metaphysics based on organic feelings in which we are somehow conscious of unity and rapport, which transcend the subject-object relation of discursive thinking. For instance, he says concerning the notion of Cause, that we need both more refined scientific and logical ideas, and also to insist on the inevitability of the primitive crude feeling of causal efficacy as an immediate experience from which we start and to which in some sense we must return. Professor Wahl looks on the "way of philosophy" as a method of combining refined concepts with the capacity for a more integral kind of experience, and one gathers that the revolution in our thinking should consist in recognizing this. It is difficult to talk about an empirical metaphysics based on organic feelings without sounding mystical. If Professor Wahl's way is right, he is saying that we should not be afraid of that. But I wish he would tell us in an independent exposition and discussion just what his "way" is.

DOROTHY EMMET.

*✓ Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society: Supplementary Vol. XXII. Logical Positivism and Ethics.*

Dissatisfaction with traditional methods and concepts in ethics is the keynote of the 1948 Joint Session volume. Professor Barnes' Presidential Address and one of the symposia deal with the "emotive" theory of ethics and another symposium attacks the problem of Things and Persons from an ethical angle. Barnes' long address is a cogent and subtle exposition of the theory misnamed "emotive." Since it depends for its effect on attention to the nuances of language, it cannot be summarized here. After defending the theory against some common misunderstandings, Barnes devotes most of his space to the psychology of moral judgment. Making up one's mind about what one wants or about a moral issue is not, he maintains, a process of discovering what is really there, but a process of sharpening or redefining or specifying a previously vague attitude. Thus the familiar question "Does the expression of an intention amount to a promise, if I know that no expectation has been aroused?" is to be answered, not by examining the concept of a promise and seeing whether or not it contains a certain constituent, but by deciding whether the pro-attitude that I vaguely adopt towards promise-keeping is or is not to be taken to cover such cases. This, of course, raises the question of objectivity, since this process of sharpening can be done well or ill. Barnes holds that I justify a moral attitude by (i) appealing to the (non-moral) facts and (ii) "claiming, but not asserting, that my decision or exhortation will commend itself to anyone who considers the facts and allows them to register on his moral sensibility." Barnes' essay is an important contribution to a subject on which very little that is acute and careful has so far been written.

*• The Emotive Theory of Ethics.*

To some extent Barnes' address turns the flank of this symposium between Robinson, Paton and Cross and one regrets that the symposiasts did not have it before them when they wrote. I find it hard to believe Robinson's main contention that, when we call a thing "good," we do intend to ascribe an objective quality to it but are always mistaken, because there is no such quality. Nevertheless much of what Robinson says in passing is interesting, in particular his remarks on definition, on which he hints that he will soon have more to say.

## NEW BOOKS

Both Paton and Cross find the emotive theory obscure and at times contradictory. They accuse the emotivists of saying that the sole functions of ethical terms are to express and to evoke emotions. In this, however, they seem to be taking the title "emotive" too seriously. For the main purpose of the emotivists is to emphasize the number and variety of the functions of ethical terms.

### *Things and Persons*

Mackinnon complains that most moral philosophers, especially the Utilitarians, "do not take ethics seriously." This comes out in their emphasis on acts rather than persons and is due, he says, to a resolute attempt "to eliminate from the discussion any appeal whatsoever to that which transcends experience." He accuses the Utilitarians of supposing that the notion of happiness clarifies ethics when it is itself in need of clarification, of subordinating people to Public Utility and of trying to apply abstract formulae to things that cannot be "mapped," such as "the disposibility of a man in the presence of his fellows and the diversity of human love." Few would now quarrel with the first accusation and Hodges gives the right answer to the second, when he says that Utilitarianism is "the principle that people matter and that moral principles as well as public institutions are there only to serve the people." Hodges goes on to do some interesting "mapping" of the sort that Mackinnon condemns. He finds three types of virtue and duty arising out of three possible types of relationship between men, and accuses moral philosophers of stretching to cover all three an analysis appropriate to one only.

Wisdom takes up the third accusation and reminds us that novelists do take ethics seriously in just the way that Mackinnon wants. He explains in his inimitable way just what gives rise to Mackinnon's discontent and just why this discontent takes the form of wanting to point to entities beyond the veil. Ethics, he implies, like art and criticism, enables us to see more clearly because it reveals "what lies not beyond or behind but hidden in the obvious."

### *Are all Philosophical questions questions of language?*

This is not a very happy symposium. Both Duncan-Jones and Körner evidently felt that the question set was too vague for profitable discussion. Duncan-Jones tries to make it more precise by deploying a formidable array of technical terms but does very little with them, while Körner goes off on a path of his own. In the opening paper Hampshire finds that an affirmative answer to the question might either take the form of saying that philosophical problems arise out of linguistic abuses and are to be cured by eliminating the abuse or the form of saying that a philosophical question is a request for a criterion of definition. He finds the first true with qualifications, the second "so misleading as to be properly described as false."

### *What can Logic do for Philosophy?*

Popper sketches a number of ways in which a technical point in logic can be applied to a well-known philosophical problem; but the sketches are too insubstantial to be easily attacked or defended. To hint darkly that the paradox of the liar might be relevant to the old problem about the meaning of criteria of meaning is, as Ayer says, not enough, and I think Ayer is also right in rejecting Popper's proposed solution of the problem of induction. Kneale's is the most interesting of these papers. He urges us to study logic



partly to prevent its becoming a mathematicians' preserve, but mainly because we shall then stop using such terms as "analytic" and "synthetic" in vague and inadequate ways that logicians have shown to be technically unsound.

The volume contains a few articles of outstanding merit, but one is left wondering whether the symposium method is altogether satisfactory. If it is to continue to be the main feature of the joint session it would be better if the first author in each symposium were to choose his subject and if the second and third were to limit themselves to attacking, defending or developing what the first author has said.

P. H. NOWELL-SMITH.

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*The Federalist*. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by MAX BELOFF.  
(Oxford: Blackwell's Political Texts. 1948. Pp. lxxi + 484. Price 9s. 6d. net.)

It is especially salutary, perhaps, for the philosopher to study a work such as *The Federalist*; for here is to be found, not systematic political theory, not the application in a general political context of philosophical methods and principles independently established, but a series of *ad hoc* political arguments in a specific political context. Such material has considerable illustrative value: it demonstrates what becomes of systematic theory in the world of practical politics; it indicates the position of the reflective man of affairs as the mediator between events and ideas, as, in part, the selector, through his diagnosis, of the interpretations that are to have continued currency—yet only in part, since there remain parts of his diagnosis, equally with parts of the diagnosis of the purist of pure theorists, that future generations will ignore.

The greater part of this Mr. Beloff's introduction very ably illustrates, and the English reader should be grateful to him for presenting *The Federalist* in its setting—a setting that is well understood in America, but too little understood in this country. For us, the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution tend to overshadow the American Revolution as influences on the trend of political thought; and it is educative, if none too easy, to undertake a reversal of our normal attitude, and review the ideas of the latter part of the eighteenth century from within a tradition in which the cardinal events are Independence and Federation. Against this background, we should understand the arguments of Hamilton, Madison and Jay as those of representatives of a particular conservatism, that of merchants, shippers and planters as antagonists of town radicals and small farmers who aimed at social as well as constitutional changes. Within this constitutional standpoint, we should further appreciate that dual allegiance on the part of the citizen, and experience of separated "powers" of government were already established features before the impact of any theories of federalism or of checks and balances; and we should also appreciate that insistence on natural rights had recently been a matter of substance, and not simply a matter of form as it had tended to become in England.

Mr. Beloff tells us something of the influence of political theorists on the two lawyers and the "squire-philosopher" who were the authors of *The Federalist*. Hamilton had read some Hobbes and Rousseau as well as Blackstone, Grotius and Pufendorf. The direct influence on Madison of Montesquieu is evident, and he was familiar with Diderot and Mably as well as with the internationalists. But the influence of historical reading is even more marked, and the generalized influence of Locke comes out emphatically. As Mr. Beloff says, to the Americans of those days "the social contract was not an anthropological figment or a logical abstraction; it was a document drawn up and signed at Philadelphia." (And he might have added that this view was not

confined to Americans: for Paine "the contract" had an historical role comparable to that of "the revolution" for the Marxist.) Equally arresting is the influence of the authors' approach on the later retention of natural law conceptions at the very time when these were ceasing to be of importance in England. These conceptions provided the means of expressing a peculiarly American view of limited government, held in common with a special form of republicanism (as in *The Federalist*, No. X, where the republic is treated as a form of government capable of controlling majority factions), and along with a special emphasis on property as the right most needing protection.

Perhaps Mr. Beloff might have drawn more attention to other aspects of the thought of the authors whose influence was less abiding: for instance, the extraordinary emphasis (for the time) on the positive necessity and capacity of government. "The vigour of government is essential to the security of liberty" (Hamilton). "Nothing is more certain than the indispensable necessity of government" (Jay). Again, there is breathing here, perhaps for the last time in America, the authentic spirit of European Enlightenment, "The science of politics, however, like most other sciences, has received great improvement. The efficacy of various principles is now well understood, which were either not known at all or imperfectly known to the ancients, the introduction of legislative balances and checks, the institution of courts composed of judges, holding their offices during good behaviour; the representation of the people in the legislature, by deputies of their own election; these are either wholly new discoveries or have made their principal progress towards perfection in modern times. They are means, and powerful means, by which the excellences of republican government may be retained, and its imperfections lessened or avoided" (Hamilton). And we find some striking examples of another approach that was to be much less important in America than in England—that of utilitarianism.—"As long as the connection subsists between his reason and his self-love, his opinions and his passions will have reciprocal influence on each other; and the former will be objects to which the latter will attach themselves" (Madison). "Government implies the power of making laws. It is essential to the idea of a law, that it be attended with a sanction, or, in other words, a penalty of punishment for disobedience. If there be no penalty annexed to disobedience, the resolutions or commands which pretend to be laws, will in fact amount to no more than advice or recommendation. . . . Why has government been instituted at all? Because the passions of men will not conform to the dictates of reason and justice, without constraint" (Hamilton). "There is one transcendent advantage belonging to the province of the state governments which alone suffices to place the matter in a clear and satisfactory light—I mean the ordinary administration of criminal and civil justice. This, of all others, is the most powerful, most universal, and most attractive source of popular obedience and attachment. It is this, which, being the immediate and visible guardian of life and property; having its benefits and its terrors in constant activity before the public eye; regulating all those personal interests and familiar concerns, to which the sensibility of individuals is more immediately awake; contributes, more than any other circumstance, to impress upon the minds of the people affection, esteem, and reverence towards the government" (Hamilton).—In a shorter description, the "political sanction."

But *The Federalist* is long and Mr. Beloff's introduction cannot go into everything. He helps the philosopher to understand how the historian views *The Federalist*, and he (and the General Editors of this series) are to be thanked for making a badly wanted new English edition of the text available to us.

WILFRID HARRISON.

*Dreadful Freedom: A Critique of Existentialism.* By MARJORIE GRENE.  
(U.S.A.: Chicago U.P.; Great Britain: C.U.P.), price 15s.

Lest readers be put off (as they well might) by the title of this book, it is worth pointing out that it is an attempt to combine the fundamental preoccupations of *Existenzphilosophie*—freedom and dread (Angst), the basic dread of the human spirit springing from the fact of freedom. Mrs. Grene has succeeded in writing a study of Existentialism which is readable and intelligible, and will serve as an excellent introduction for those who find the writings of the professed existentialist forbidding. It is sympathetic but balanced, and though it covers too wide a field to be entirely satisfying to the student in search of an exhaustive discussion, it does at least show considerable acquaintance with the literature of the subject. To what extent the subject calls for fuller treatment will be a matter of opinion. But at any rate, readers of Mrs. Grene's book will be able to decide for themselves whether they wish to continue. Her own conclusion is stated in the final sentences of the Postscript: "Existentialism is a courageous and an honest attempt at a new morality. It may yet be one. But, to the present writer at least, it seems more likely that this is not the new morality we may hope for, but only a new, subtler, and more penetrating statement of our old disheartenment, a new expression of an old despair."

T. CORBISHLEY, S.J.

*Natural Philosophy of Cause and Chance.* By MAX BORN. Being the Waynflete Lectures delivered in the College of St. Mary Magdalen, Oxford, in Hilary Term, 1948. (Oxford: Clarendon Press (Geoffrey Cumberlege). Pp. viii + 215. Price 17s. 6d.)

In this volume the seven Waynflete Lectures delivered last year by Max Born in Magdalen, Oxford, are written up as ten chapters, amounting to 128 pages and containing in the text a good deal of mathematics; they are followed by a mathematical appendix, in 81 pages, of 36 concise and admirably clear mathematical proofs of results used in the text. The scope of the work is the whole modern mathematical physics in so far as it bears on the subject of the title. Professor Born, Tait Professor at Edinburgh and formerly professor at Frankfurt-on-Main and at Göttingen, one of the founders of quantum dynamics, is an experienced writer of highly technical works in mathematical physics—lattice-theory, atom-mechanics, optics—and in this work his style reaches its apotheosis of incisiveness, elegance and clarity. It is safe to say that though it is no text-book, it will be used by teachers of mathematical physics the world over for supplying in brief space the essential proofs of many of the essential steps in their expositions of their subject.

The main purpose of the lectures is to discuss the role in the actual world of physics of the two metaphysical concepts of causality and probability. He differentiates causality from determinism; and he differentiates causality from mere antecedence in time, though he concedes that antecedence in time, or even simultaneity, may be temporal attributes of causality, just as contiguity may be a spatial attribute of causality. Determinism is merely the possibility of prediction of the future from the past or the past from the future; causality is used by the experimentalist as meaning a verifiable dependence of one thing on another. When two states of a deterministic system are symmetrical with respect to one another, one can no more speak of the earlier as the cause of the later than the later as the cause of the earlier. The Newtonian system of mechanics and gravitation implies the notion of cause in a way the Ptolemaic did not, though both are equally deterministic.

With these preliminaries, Born attacks the grand question: how is it that statistical mechanics gives an irreversible increase of entropy with time, when it is based on mechanical equations which are reversible in time? What is the nature of the metamorphosis of reversible mechanics into irreversible thermodynamics? He goes into this with finely architectural detail: he shows that irreversibility is a consequence of the introduction of ignorance into the fundamental laws of the system under consideration. He shows for example that whilst a system of  $N$  non-interacting molecules obeys a reversible equation, a system of molecules colliding with each other, in which we replace the effect of collisions by a suitable average and thereby introduce our ignorance of detailed values of co-ordinates, obeys necessarily an irreversible equation, which is changed essentially when we replace  $dt$  by  $-dt$ . More remarkably still, he shows that it suffices to assume one single molecule beyond control. The law of entropy increase,  $dS/dt > 0$ , is then deduced rigorously when the statistical definition of entropy  $S$  is introduced.

Born seems, however, curiously blind to the fact that reversibility is only an accidental property of the usual Newtonian equations of motion, due to the particular scale of time unconsciously adopted by physics in using Newtonian mechanics. Clearly a mechanical equation of motion can only be strictly reversible if the velocity of every significant particle in the universe is simultaneously reversed, hence reversibility only applies to the equation of motion of a single particle if all the other particles in the universe can be deemed to be at rest, when reversing their velocities makes no difference. This means, in the terminology of kinematic relativity, that all the fundamental particles in the universe, i.e. all the extra-galactic nebulae, must be at relative rest, which is true only if  $\tau$ -time is adopted. This measure of time is an invariant; it gives an absolute simultaneity throughout the universe as measured by the fundamental observers' clocks, and justifies Newton's description of time. But this measure of time is not in itself fundamental; the deeper measure of time is  $t$ -time, the time in which the usual Lorentz formulas hold good, and in this scale of time the equations of motion are not reversible; this time already has an arrow attached to it, the motion of prior and posterior having been incorporated into the analysis from the start.

The philosophical point of demonstrating mathematically the one-way increase of entropy therefore disappears. Born's presentation of the proof of this is none the less interesting from the extreme virtuosity it displays.

Born's neglect of the fundamental measure of time arises from his well-known hostility to kinematic relativity, and indeed to *a priori* procedures in physics at all. He states dogmatically (p. 141) that Eddington's treatment *which gives the impression that the mathematical theory of relativity follows from pure reason, by the mere use of epistemological principles, is "wrong and misleading"*. It must therefore be stated, equally dogmatically but with greater reason, that the Lorentz formulae, however they were originally obtained (and whatever the position as regards so-called "general relativity"), are nothing but the reduction of epistemological principles to mathematics; they simply express the relations connecting the observations made by two observers who can observe one another and observe the same event by the methods of radio-location. This has been abundantly shown in kinematic relativity: it may be unwelcome to Born, but that does not justify his burying his head in the sand like an ostrich.

In the rest of the book Born is concerned to show how quantum mechanics necessarily introduces probability relations into the domain of exact causation. He supplies a rigorous, simple, but exciting proof of Heisenberg's uncertainty

relation, deduced from the simplest formulation of the quantum relation as a generalization of the Poisson bracket (p. 189). The quantum theory, though embodying exact causality, is not deterministic, and its exact laws refer not to co-ordinates and momenta but to probability relations between them. This position, he ruefully admits, was not acceptable to Planck himself, or even now to Einstein, whose letters to himself on this subject he dutifully quotes: Einstein believes in no "dice-playing god."

Born understands by *reality* the aggregate of observational invariants. This would be all right if physics actually presented such things as mass and energy as invariants. Energy, however, in current physics, (as expressly stated by Born) is not an invariant, but the fourth or time-component of a 4-vector. In fact he attributes to this non-invariance of energy Einstein's deduction of the relation between energy and mass, and de Broglie's intuitional approach to wave-mechanics. In kinematic relativity, on the other hand, energy and mass are actual invariants, taking the same numerical values whatever fundamental observer computes them.

But altogether this is a memorable book, and its argumentation floats serenely above the necessarily topical features which accompanied most of the decisive steps by which physics reached the present position in quantum theory. Born thinks that probability and indeterminism have come to stay, and that whatever future developments quantum physics may have in store, they will not be in the direction of a return to determinism.

E. A. MILNE.

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*Probability and Induction.* By WILLIAM KNEALE, Fellow of Exeter College and Lecturer in Philosophy in the University of Oxford. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1949 Pp. 264. Price 15s. net.)

This is a discussion of the philosophical aspects of probability and induction, with an account of the historical development and judgments on the different views that have been put forward. It is well-informed and well-written: the criticism of R. von Mises' frequency theory of probability, for instance, is admirable. The general definition of probability by use of the notion of *range* seems very satisfactory; when a class is closed, the measure of its range is defined to be the number of members of the class; when the class is open, the definition of range is somewhat more complicated: but in all cases, the probability that an  $\alpha$  thing has the characteristic  $\beta$  is measured by the range of  $\alpha$ -ness and  $\beta$ -ness conjoined, divided by the range of  $\beta$ -ness.

The subject of induction is highly controversial, and a reviewer may, without depreciating the work, say that he finds himself unable to agree with the doctrines put forward in the last quarter of the book. These constitute its chief novelty: and as the questions at issue are fundamental, they seem to deserve the greatest share of attention.

Inductive probability is traditionally based on the Bayes-Laplace formula. Mr. Kneale rejects this theory entirely. "I shall try to show," he says (p. 23), "that the theory and calculus of chances cannot provide a solution to the problem of induction. . . . Many . . . have supposed that inductive arguments must be justified within the theory of probability. . . . This is a mistake." "It is now time," he says later (p. 211), "to discuss the fundamental question whether the probability which attaches to the conclusion of an induction can be brought within the theory of chances. I wish to maintain that it cannot." And again (p. 223), "The notion of probability appropriate to the theory of chances has no application to the results of induction."

His argument is based on a principle which he enunciates as follows (p. 234).

## NEW BOOKS

"We can have no *a priori* knowledge, whether intuitive or demonstrative, of laws or probability that will help us in making inferences from the observed to the unobserved: and it is a mistake to suppose that such propositions can have probability in the sense of the theory of chances."

The statement about the impossibility of making inferences from the observed to the unobserved seems at first sight plausible. The consideration which is overlooked in it is, that there may be some known interlocking of the observed and the unobserved, which enables us to make inferences about the unobserved from our knowledge of what has been observed. The point may be illustrated by a simple example. Suppose we visit a rifle range and find a man firing at a target. At first we know nothing regarding his skill as a marksman; but after watching a number of shots we are able to form a rough estimate of it, and this estimate becomes more sharply defined and more confident the longer we observe his performance: so that ultimately we attain to a trustworthy knowledge of his marksmanship, i.e. we can assign a probability that his next shot will be a bull's eye.

In this example the interlocking of the observed and the unobserved consists in the fact that the same man is firing in both cases. We assume the knowledge of a fact of experience, which may be stated thus: statistics regarding the behaviour of innumerable men have shown that there is a positive correlation between the performances of the same man under similar circumstances on different occasions. The knowledge of this fact justifies us in applying the Bayes-Laplace theory to the inductive process which is concerned with this particular marksman.

Further, in making predictions regarding future shots we simplify the problem by a process of idealization, i.e. we ignore the effects of wind, etc., so that the quality of marksmanship is regarded as the only factor to be considered in estimating probabilities.

Now assumptions such as these—the assumption of a permanent quality in the man, and the assumptions involved in idealization—are characteristic of *applied* mathematics in contradistinction to pure mathematics. For instance, in the applied-mathematical problem of finding the orbit of a planet round the sun, we assume that the bodies have permanent qualities, namely their masses, and we idealize the problem by neglecting the effects of their oblate figures, etc. Thus the practice of inductive probability belongs essentially to applied mathematics; it is the application of pure mathematics (namely the Bayes-Laplace theorem) to a situation regarding whose nature we make certain assumptions, and that explains why it is impossible to justify induction in the way in which a theorem of pure mathematics is justified, namely by logic alone.

Mr. Kneale sees clearly this last-mentioned impossibility, but his plan for dealing with the difficulty does not commend itself, and has led him to the strange doctrine that the probabilities occurring in the theory of inductive probability are somehow different in kind from ordinary probabilities.

There is one more feature of Mr. Kneale's treatment which calls for attention. "Within the last few years," he says (p. 254), "some physicists have argued that the quantum theory enables, or even requires, them to dispense with the notion of natural necessity or impossibility. If this contention were true, it would show that my account of induction is false—but it is not universally accepted by those most competent to discuss the scientific developments on which it is supposed to be based, and I think it can be shown to be a mistaken interpretation of those developments". and (p. 255) "The thesis which I wish to dispute is not part of the quantum theory itself, but a philosophical gloss by some of the expositors, namely, that probability rules concerning trans-

endent objects such as electrons are ultimate and presuppose no principles of necessity or impossibility whatsoever."

Regarding this, we can only say that Mr. Kneale has misunderstood the situation in quantum physics. It is unfortunate that he did not have the advantage of reading Professor Max Born's volume of Waynflete lectures on *Natural Philosophy of Cause and Chance*, which was published almost simultaneously with his own work, and which contains (see specially p. 109) the correct exposition of the matter.

In spite of these criticisms, which affect only its concluding part, Mr. Kneale's book must be regarded as a work of high value; and those who are studying the subjects of which it treats will be attracted by its lucid and interesting style.

EDMUND WHITTAKER.

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*The Metamorphosis of Philosophy.* By John Oulton Wisdom. (Al-Maaref Press, Cairo, 1947. Pp. vi. 224.)

I must apologise for some delay in reviewing this book. In the space which the Editor has put at my disposal I can only deal briefly with a few of the many interesting topics which it raises.

Mr. J. O. Wisdom is concerned with a problem which arises directly out of the contemporary situation in philosophy. The problem might be stated as follows: "Philosophical analysis has shown that speculative philosophy (or metaphysics) is NonSense (which is the author's term for statements which in the ordinary sense of meaning have no meaning). Nevertheless, speculative philosophers have 'understood' one another, so that their NonSense is not simply nonsense. What is it?"

To understand the author's reply it is necessary to understand what he means by NonSense. He considers three different lines of philosophical development, and as a result is led to accept several different criteria of what constitutes NonSense:

1. A statement is NonSense if it is not in, and cannot be translated into, ordinary language. This position seems beset with difficulties. Are the following statements in ordinary language? (i) The soul is immortal; (ii) How infinite is man, in reason how like a God! (iii) I am seeing a red sense-datum. What, in short, is the criterion of ordinary language? Mr. Wisdom offers no help, because he assumes there is no difficulty.

2. A second criterion is "that any statement that is incompatible with the truth of such common-sense statements (e.g. *That is an inkstand* and *I have a father*) must be NonSense" (p. 89). It seems that this criterion is inconsistent with the former. Consider the statement *Time is not real*. If this has an ordinary meaning, say, *Nothing has ever happened before anything else*, then it is incompatible with *I read Mr. Wisdom's book before writing this review*. If the latter statement is true, the former is false, and not NonSense. If *Time is not real* has not any ordinary meaning, then it cannot, so far as I can see, be incompatible with the statement *I read Mr. Wisdom's book before writing this review*. This contention of Mr. Wisdom's is developed on the basis of Moore's *Defence of Common Sense*, and he suspects that he may have misrepresented Moore since he adds a note (p. 39): "It is possible that Professor Moore himself would have considered them false rather than NonSense." Moore's view in this essay was that some philosophers had used *Time is not real* in an ordinary sense, in which case it was incompatible, and therefore false. Some, he thought, may have used it in some other way to say what was not incompatible (*Contemporary British Philosophy*, Second Series, p. 201).

Neither of these two criteria of NonSense is effective. In fact Mr. Wisdom

## PHILOSOPHY

The theory vaguely presupposes a Freudian psychology. There is no need to disprove speculative philosophy. It will be *seen* to be a fantasy, once the Reality-Principle attains prominence in our minds.

There is a lack of plausibility about the way in which the theory is stated, chiefly, I think, because the author is not himself, and, I suspect, has never been, exercised by metaphysical questions. The importance that value has had for the great metaphysical systems suggests that there may be *some* truth in the idea, but it can hardly be true or complete as it stands. For metaphysicians not only understand one another. They argue with one another, point out logical defects, suggest improvements, etc. In fact, what still demands explanation is the extent of the features common to science and metaphysics regarded as forms of rational discourse. If these are illusory, metaphysics is the most astounding and persistent delusion under which the human race has ever laboured.

The book is printed on pleasant white paper, but the printing is marred by misprints too numerous to list.

WINSTON F. H. BARNES.

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*The Life of Reason.* By W. G. DE BURGH. (London: Macdonald & Evans. 1949. Pp xxiii + 219. Price 15s. net).

De Burgh's posthumous book is in essentials an attack on the conception of reason as exclusively a faculty of inference, and the consequent ascription of a non-rational origin to many important elements in human beliefs and behaviour. Against this de Burgh wants to advocate (p. 19) "an enlarged view of reason—a view that will sanction the inclusion of intuitive thinking, aesthetic and scientific imagination, the higher levels of emotion, and moral and religious faith, within the scope of the intellectual life." Reason is (p. 4) "a unity of diverse functions, each of which exhibits rationality at its own level," as we can see by examining the different spheres in which it is displayed—science, history, art, religion, philosophy and practical life. The main body of the book is devoted to an examination of this sort, with an assessment of the comparative rationality of each sphere, the aim being to show (p. 24) that there is "an ordered hierarchy of types both of speculative and of practical reason" and "to display religious experience as the crowning type of rational activity."

In all this there is nothing new: it is the familiar theme of the dialectics of thirty or forty years ago that we are invited to pursue, and both method and conclusions (except perhaps for the emphasis on religion as the head of the hierarchy) remain substantially unaltered. But it would be a pity if the book were dismissed as a conglomeration of out-of-date doctrines, long ago exposed as absurd. For one thing, the type of philosophizing it represents is now so little in fashion that we can almost begin to look at it dispassionately and learn something from it. And for another, whilst no one could claim that de Burgh was a philosopher of the first rank, with something strikingly new to say, it is impossible to read him without feeling that his was a singularly honest mind, with a genuine interest in the diversity as well as the unity of experience. Those who cannot bring themselves to accept his main argument may none the less find a certain stimulus in some of his detailed contentions—in particular, in what he has to say about aesthetic and religious experience, about which he raises questions too little discussed by contemporary philosophers.

The book gets off to a bad start, after the introductory chapter, with a conventional and unconvincing account of scientific thinking, which it



## NEW BOOKS

characterizes as dealing in generalities and eschewing values (though there are signs, the author thinks (p. 33), of a revolution inside science itself, "leading to a reconstruction of scientific principles that carries with it the inclusion of much that has hitherto been excluded from its province"). The least that can be said about this is that it leaves the perennial attraction of scientific philosophies unexplained. Next history is considered, and here again the treatment is on conventional idealist lines. The historian, we are told, achieves his results not by explicit reference to generalizations but "largely" by "intuitive insight into the personal relationships of individuals." Thus historical knowledge is knowledge of the individual. Now in one sense these assertions are not open to dispute: certainly it is the case that historians are interested in particular events for their own sake, and their "constant references to principles of human nature" (p. 47) are, often at any rate, "the outcome of intuitive sympathy and understanding rather than of a knowledge of psychology." But it does not follow from this that historical thinking is altogether different from scientific thinking, as de Burgh wants to suggest. In some ways of course it is: as he points out (p. 48), it is with tracing particular "systems or patterns of human acts," rather than with prediction or prophecy, that historians are properly concerned. But the crucial question here is that of the generalizations which historical thinking appears to imply. Are these, as de Burgh asserts (p. 47), "only provisional aids" to an understanding which is, at best, intuitive? The point can scarcely be established without more argument than he gives, nor can we be put off with the declaration (p. 49) that causal connections in history are "as unique as are the events connected." "Mary's jealousy, and Othello's," we read in one place (p. 48), "are not viewed as instances of a common characteristic, each is unique and differs *toto caelo* from the other." If this is true, why do we speak of both as jealous? There is surely more in this topic than met de Burgh's eye.

From history we pass to art, which is treated interestingly if not wholly adequately. Here the main point the author has to make is that art serves, in an important way, to communicate knowledge. It is sense to talk of the "truth" of art or the "reality" of the artist's "vision," and the language of many poets and artists bears this out, as does talk of aesthetic coherence or contradictions. "Who can deny that the artist achieves a synthesis of the manifold or that his synthesis is, in the literal sense, intelligible?" (p. 67). But to say this is not to claim that the artist's vision could be translated into propositional form. Art works by means of symbols, but its symbols are not those of everyday speech. They belong to another order, and perhaps open up aspects of reality closed to logical thought.

De Burgh tries to meet theories which stress the connection between art and emotion by admitting that "in art, as in human intercourse, and, above all, in religion, it seems as though strength of feeling were a necessary condition of clear insight" (p. 66). But he will have nothing to do with attempts to make artistic activity merely practical or emotive; it is, for him, an essential part of aesthetic experience to be cognitive. And whether we accept his account (pp. 74-80) of what is cognised in art or not, I think we should agree that he has done well to stress this claim. To suggest that a lyric or a simple song is an expression of the writer's emotion is one thing; to hold that the same can be said of an epic, a novel or even a symphony, is another. At the least, a lengthy course of philosophical therapy is needed to persuade artists, writers and critics to abandon the sort of claim de Burgh makes on their behalf.

The next topic is philosophy and religion, which are treated together. They resemble each other, we are told, in that each claims to be comprehensive,

## PHILOSOPHY

but differ in that while philosophy is purely speculative, religion is practical too. But the suggestion that religion is merely practical, like the suggestion that religious statements are only an imaginative representation of philosophical truths, is radically false. Religion, like art, is an important source of knowledge, and indeed gives us ultimate truth about the world so far as such truth can be humanly come by.

This was clearly the core of de Burgh's personal philosophy, and it is not surprising in consequence to find him devoting much attention in the present volume to the ancient question of the relations of faith and reason. He accepted the dogmas of the Christian revelation as a matter of faith; but as a philosopher he was anxious to find a rational basis for this faith. He wanted to show that we are in a position not only to believe (by an act of will), but also to know (by a cognitive act), that the Christian gospel is true. His discussion of the question here is incomplete, but the main lines on which he was working are clear enough. He argued in the first place that there is a case for regarding religious experience as a genuine form of cognition, "not purely, or even primarily, inferential," but "experiential and personal, not a knowing 'about' God, but a 'knowing God'" (p. 90). A defence of mysticism as a source of communicable knowledge (pp. 95-100) is the main support for this position. And secondly he maintained that the traditional distinction between natural and revealed religion could be re-interpreted, so that natural religion was transformed into a theocentric metaphysics, while the truths of revelation were seen to be both internally compatible with each other and capable of some sort of confirmation from speculative argument.

It is the last point which is crucial, and de Burgh does not underestimate its difficulties. He admits (p. 116) that "the factor thus responsive to metaphysical justification is but an abstract fragment of the whole doctrine; far more remains an unfathomable mystery than here finds confirmation by reason." And again (p. 118) "the resulting judgment" (when we come to believe in God) "is entertained with an assurance quite disproportionate to the weight of the evidence which can be adduced to support it." Insight, in fact, here again, needs to be complemented by emotion if we are really to see: except when received in the appropriate frame of mind, theological statements are open to grave misunderstanding. "The proposition, 'The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us,' means to the believer in the Incarnation something very different from its meaning to the disinterested and impartial auditor" (p. 95). But if this is so we are left asking whether the truths of revelation have been rendered intelligible after all, and whether the essence of faith is not, despite everything, practical belief in a sphere where insight is totally lacking.

I am not myself competent to discuss these questions, but I hope that enough has been said to indicate the interest of de Burgh's arguments both for philosophers and for theologians. Philosophers at any rate ought, I think, to take account of his point of view before they assure themselves that religious statements are "literally senseless," though of course practically important. For there certainly are religious persons who would not be willing to accept such an analysis of their beliefs. Such persons do hold that religious experience affords knowledge; though they would add, as de Burgh himself does (p. 89), that it is knowledge "conditioned by the gift of divine grace," and thus open only to the faithful. The question is whether they can have it both ways.

I have no space for the discussion of the forms of practical reason, nor for the concluding chapter on the problem of immanence and transcendence, which is in any case more theological than philosophical. I must end by stating my opinion that, while de Burgh has failed to make a convincing case for his main point, he has drawn attention to possible sources of knowledge

## NEW BOOKS

which are too often overlooked to-day. He left his book unfinished (his own estimate was that it needed two more years work for completion), and it suffers from a certain looseness of writing and a tendency to repetition in its published form. But for all that it can be recommended to all who like their philosophy painted on a broad canvas; it is both more readable and more reasonable than many earlier volumes of the same general sort.

W. H. WALSH.

*A Short History of Existentialism.* By JEAN WAHL. (Philosophical Library, New York, 1949. Pp. 38. Price \$2.75.)

Jean Wahl, author of *Études Kierkegaardianes*, is professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne; and this short work is the translation of a lecture which he gave at the *Club Maintenant* in 1946. A translation of the subsequent discussion is also included.

M. Wahl's theme may be summed up in his own words, "In the history of the philosophy of existence one goes from a consideration of existence proper to a study of Being with the help of the idea of existence." This seems to me to be quite true. He also asks: "Is it, perhaps, necessary to choose between existentialism and existence?" This is to ask whether a philosophy of existence, in the existentialist sense of "existence," is a contradiction in terms. Perhaps it is.

In M. Wahl's opinion "Kierkegaard sheds, in his *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, all possible light on this notion of existence." The late Russian philosopher Berdiaeff, who participated in the discussion, approves of Jaspers, as being more akin than Heidegger to Kierkegaard, whereas M. Levinas declares that "the only existentialist is Heidegger himself, who rejects the term." Professor Gervitch, however, declares that Heidegger "is not an honest thinker," that he is "bereft of ethics and intellectual scruples" and that "existentialism applies itself to the task of reducing existence to zero." I do not know what Heidegger's ethical condition may be, but I am convinced that his philosophical position is not always accurately represented in this book. The chief blame for this must fall on Heidegger himself, I think. There is a good deal to be said in favour of making one's meaning clear on the first occasion of expressing it.

FREDERICK C. COPLESTON, S.J.

Books also received:

THOMAS GODDARD BERGEN and MAX HAROLD FISCH (Translators). *The New Science of Giambattista Vico* (from 3rd edition 1744). Cornell University Press, London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1949. Pp. xv + 393. 27s. 6d.

HECTOR HAWTON. *Philosophy for Pleasure*. London: Watts & Co. 1949. Pp. x + 214. 10s. 6d.

EDMOND PRIVAT. *The Clash of Loyalties*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1949. Pp. 96. 7s. 6d.

ROY J. DEFERRARI, SISTER M. INVOLATA BARRY and IGNATIUS MCGUINNESS. *A Lexicon of St. Thomas Aquinas* (based on the "Summa Theologiae" and selected passages of his other works). Fascicle I. Washington, U.S.A.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1948. Pp. 262. \$12.50.

EVAN ROCHE. *The De Primo Principio of John Duns Scotus* (A Revised Text and a Translation). New York: The Franciscan Institute. Louvain, Belgium: E. Nauwelaerts, 1949. Pp. xvii + 153. No price stated.

# PHILOSOPHY

- ARTHUR KOESTLER. *Insight and Outlook*. London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd. 1949. Pp. xiv + 442. 25s.
- REV. THOMAS J. HIGGINS, S.J. *Man as Man (The Science and Art of Ethics)*. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, U.S.A.: The Bruce Publishing Company. 1949. Pp. xii + 607. \$3.75.
- W. J. H. SPROTT. *Philosophy and Common Sense (Inaugural Lecture)*. Published by the University of Nottingham. 1949. Pp. 20. 1s. 6d.
- ✓ RASVIHARY DAS. *A Handbook to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*. Bombay: Hind Kitabs Ltd. 1949. Pp. xii + 238. Rs. 6-8.
- CHESTER C. MAXEY. *Political Philosophies*. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1949. Pp. xiii + 712. 24s.
- SIR EDMUND WHITTAKER. *From Euclid to Eddington (The Turner Lectures, 1947)*. London: Cambridge University Press. 1949. Pp. ix + 212. 15s.
- D. G. JAMES. *The English Augustans: Vol. I. The Life of Reason. (Hobbes, Locke, Bolingbroke)*. London: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd. 1949. Pp. xiii + 272. 18s.
- ALBERT SCHWEITZER. *Goethe*. London: Adam & Charles Black. 1949. Pp. ix + 84. 6s.
- M. H. CARRÉ. *Phases of Thought in England*. Clarendon Press: Oxford. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege. 1949. Pp. xix + 392. 30s.
- PETER LASLETT, Editor. *Patriarcha, or, the Natural Powers of the Kings of England asserted and other political works of Sir Robert Filmer*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1949. Pp. 326. 12s. 6d.
- JOHN PLAMENATZ. *Mill's Utilitarianism* reprinted with a study of *The English Utilitarians*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1949. Pp. 228. 10s. 6d.
- ✓ M. HIRIYANNA. *The Essentials of Indian Philosophy*. London: Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1949. Pp. 216. 12s. 6d.
- ✓ GABRIEL MARCEL. *Being and Having*. Westminster: Dacre Press. 1949. Pp. 240. 10s. 6d.
- ✓ W. F. LOFTHOUSE. *F. H. Bradley*. London: Epworth Press. 1949. Pp. iv + 273. 10s. 6d.
- JEAN BOYER. *Pour Connaitre la Pensée de Goethe*. Paris: Bordas. 1949. Pp. 188. No price stated.
- VLADIMIR JANKÉLÉVITCH. *Traité des Vertus*. Paris: Bordas. 1949. Pp. 804. No price stated.
- SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR. *Le Deuxième Sexe*. Vol. I: "Les Faits et les Mythes." Paris: Gallimard. 1949. Pp. 395. Fr. francs 435.
- VICTOR GOLDSCHMIDT. *La Religion de Platon*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. 1949. Pp. xii + 156. Fr. francs 200.
- GABRIEL MARCEL. *Position et Approches Concrètes du Mystère Ontologique*. Paris: J. Vrin. 1949. Pp. 96. Fr. francs 30.
- MAX PLANCK. *Vorträge und Erinnerungen (Fünfte Auflage der Wege zur physikalischen Erkenntnis)*. Stuttgart: S. Hirzel Verlag. 1949. Pp. vi + 380. No price stated.
- H. A. SALMONY. *Die Philosophie des jungen Herder*. Zürich: Vineta Verlag. 1949. Pp. xii + 250. Sw. francs 14.
- HANS REINER. *Das Prinzip von Gut und Böse*. Freiburg: Verlag Karl Alber. 1948. Pp. ii + 36. No price stated.
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- M. F. SCIACCA. *S. Agostino—la vita e l'opera—l'itinerario della mente*. Brescia: Morcelliana. 1949. Pp. xvi + 350. No price stated.

## A NOTE ON SEMANTICS

In a recent discussion (Ryle, *Philosophy*, January, 1949) certain objections to the semantic method were raised. I wish to clarify two of these issues which are important for a correct understanding of semantics and which are of general interest.

1. It is stated that a semantic language-system represents a code. Now, when we use the word "code" in connection with language, what comes to one's mind is the Morse code, or the flag code. That is, by means of a dictionary we translate the expressions of ordinary English, in one instance, into an arrangement of dots and dashes, and in the other instance, into a visual configuration (and motion) of coloured flags. It is undoubtedly a translation of one language into another, artificial but still not formalized, language.

A semantic language-system is equally artificial but it is also formalized. It consists of a calculus (in the object-language) and a set of semantic rules (in the meta-language). And it is a mistake to believe that a semantic language-system provides a translation into the meta-language for any language which is taken as object-language. A semantic system represents an *interpretation*, not a translation. The loose usage of the term "translation" has created many puzzles, e.g., when it is said that the sense-data language is translatable into the physical-thing language; and there are other examples of this wrong usage. When we speak of a translation, we normally have in mind, say, the translation of a sentence of the English language into the corresponding sentence of the French language. "This horse is white" is translated into "*Ce cheval est blanc*." Or, we describe the same state of affairs, within the same universe of discourse, but we use different symbols (or, rather, tokens of these symbols) and a different set of syntactic rules. And the translation is accepted as correct when we obtain the *same meaning* for both sentences: that is, we keep the *same semantic rules* (at least, essentially). Indeed, we judge the quality of the translation by the degree to which the semantic rules approach one another in the two languages. Since a natural language is not formalized, we have to invent the semantic rules in any given instance, and there are often disputes about the correct shade of meaning.

In a translation we change the syntactic rules but we preserve the semantic rules. In an interpretation we change *both* syntactic and semantic rules. The two language-systems are alternative interpretations describing, in general, the same experience; but these descriptions are in different terms, and within a different universe of discourse. We make use of different individuals and properties in each system. "This horse is white" may be taken as a sentence in the thing language which, alternatively, may be interpreted in terms of sense-data, e.g., "In my visual field there is now a patch of peculiar shape and of white colour."

It is impossible, then, to say that a semantic language-system is a code, if we understand this term in its normal usage. However, it is agreed that there is a great difference between a natural language (such as English) and a semantic language-system. A system is indeed an artificial device which we invent to make the meaning of our sentences more precise. And one reason for inventing such systems is that we wish to avoid semantic paradoxes such as that of the liar. The formalization of language is the only means of obtaining a consistent language (Tarski, *Journal of Philosophy and Phen. Research*, vol. 4, March 1944). The construction of artificial language-systems does not arise from the perverse desires of logicians but from the need of reconstructing

~~Our~~ language—and, in particular, the language of science—in a logical manner so that we can establish more clearly the meaning of our sentences.

2. The second question concerns the rule of designation in semantics. It is said that this rule gives the meaning of an expression so introduced; and the objection is made that, by means of inverted commas (quotation marks), we can state the meaning of an expression only in special, usually trivial, examples.

The first part of the argument is a simple misunderstanding. The rule of designation is not *the* rule of meaning within a semantic system. There are four semantic rules which have been formulated in the presentation of semantics as we know it to-day: the rules of formation, of designation, of range, and of truth. If one rule is singled out as the rule of meaning, it would be the rule of truth for an individual sentence (or a rule of range for a definite class of sentences). For a certain rule of truth states the condition under which a given sentence is true. Or, it is closest to the customary formulation of a general requirement of meaning which is often called "the truth theory of meaning": "To know the meaning of a sentence is to know the conditions under which the sentence would be found true."

Strictly speaking, the meaning of a sentence within a semantic system is given only by the totality of rules; for we need all of them to give a complete statement of the meaning of a sentence in the object-language in terms of the meta-language. The rule of designation is only one of these rules and it is concerned merely with the introduction of expressions into the object-language, that is, with enriching its vocabulary. But meaning is a property of sentences, as is truth; and in semantics meaning is based upon the semantic conception of truth. In semantics meaning is not the physical fact to which the expression refers; neither is meaning a relation between a fact and the expression describing it; nor is meaning a relation between expressions. Both the correspondence theory and the coherence theory of truth as developed by traditional philosophy are rejected in favour of the semantic conception of truth arising from the investigations into the foundations of mathematics.

It is therefore a misunderstanding of this conception if it is said that in semantics "... to ask What does the expression 'E' mean? is to ask, To what does 'E' stand in the relation in which 'Fido' stands to Fido?" The relation of "Fido" to Fido is given by a rule of designation, and it is an admittedly trivial example of such a rule. If a rule is given of the form "'Fido' designates Fido," it is quite clear that we introduce the name "Fido" for a certain physical thing, that is, for our dog Fido. We cannot speak here of meaning since we do not normally say that proper names have meaning. The rule of designation is a sentence which states the designation—not the meaning—of a certain thing. It is intended to introduce a term of the object-language by means of a meta-language; and the meta-language is assumed to be known and furnishes an interpretation of the object-language. And since it is only expressions that can designate, we show by the help of quotation marks which expression is to be used as a name. We speak *about* an expression of the object-language, and thus we must use its name. It does not mean that therefore all expressions of the object-language *are* names.

Nor is it objectionable to use quotation marks when we wish to introduce names; indeed, this is the normal procedure. It is true that we need not use the device of inverted commas; if we want, we can use Gothic letters, or Greek letters, or we can make autonomous use of a symbol (Carnap, *Logical Syntax of Language*, p. 156). Quotation marks, however, are the simplest, and most natural, device for this purpose.

But quotation marks are never used in semantics to give the meaning of an

## A NOTE ON SEMANTICS

expression, although they may occur in connection with a statement possessing meaning. Thus the rule of designation is a sentence (in the meta-language) which relates an expression (in the object-language) to another expression (in the meta-language) which, in turn, may or may not refer to a thing or state of affairs. And we mention a thing (or an expression) by using its name. It is not astonishing that we require quotation marks to accomplish this aim. The use of quotation marks merely shows that we keep the familiar, but necessary, distinction between use and mention of an expression.

Semantics, as a scientific discipline, is in its infancy. There are many problems to overcome, and the terminology is, perhaps, unnecessarily cumbersome. When semantics is more explored, particularly in its application to science—as descriptive semantics—improvements will no doubt be made. But the two problems raised in this discussion appear to have found an adequate treatment already by semantics as we have it to-day.

ERNEST H. HUTTEN.

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# INSTITUTE NOTES

The following lectures have been arranged for the 1949-50 Session:

*University Hall, 14 Gordon Square, W.C.1, at 5.15 p.m.*

1949

October	14	<i>Scope and Aims of "Synoptic" Philosophy</i>	} A course of four lectures by Prof. H. H. Price on <i>Synoptic Philosophy (The Philosophy of Nature)</i> .
October	21	<i>Russell's Theory of the External World</i>	
October	28	<i>Russell's Neutral Monism</i>	
November	4	<i>Neutral Monism and the Philosophy of Nature</i>	
November	11	<i>Scientific Concepts and Synthetic Philosophy</i>	S. E. Toulmin, M.A.
November	18	<i>"Everything"</i>	H. L. A. Hart, M.A.

1950

January	27	<i>The Philosophy of Human Nature and the Science of Human Nature</i>	} A course of four lectures by Karl Britton, M.A., on <i>The Philosophy of Human Nature</i> .
February	3	<i>Ways of Knowing and Kinds of Knowledge</i>	
February	10	<i>Morality Tradition and Reason</i>	
February	17	<i>Truths of Reflection and Imagination</i>	

*University College, (Anatomy Theatre), Gower Street, W.C.1, at 7.30 p.m.*

1949

November	16	<i>Hume and Kant and Their Attitude to Metaphysics</i>	} P. F. Strawson, M.A.
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1950

March	22	<i>The Gates of the Future</i>	Prof. J. W. Harvey
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[Suggested]

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